

Bavarian News

Vol. 5, Nr. 17 U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch September 2, 2009

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Garrison MP's train with local Garmisch Polizei

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Acclaimed travel author visits community, inspires readers, writers

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View photos of the 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company as they return to U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Aug. 29 after completing one of the Army's last 15-month deployments.

For more photos of the redeployment ceremony, visit www.flickr.com/photos/us-aggrafenwoehr/sets

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Local BOSS program wins big at Army-wide level

by **MELISSA WOLFF**
Assistant Editor

During the 2009 Department of the Army Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers annual conference in Leesburg, Va., Aug. 10-15, the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr BOSS program raked in two prestigious honors.

USAG Grafenwoehr BOSS president, Cpl. Robert Shomper and Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios, command sergeant major for USAG Grafenwoehr, accepted two of the six awards given to BOSS programs Army-wide, bringing home the "Best Event" award for a large community and runner-up for "Best Installation" award.

The event that won the Grafenwoehr program its high-

est accolades was the Netzaberg Middle School's first annual field day. As Shomper explained, many of the children in Netzaberg schools have parents deployed, and without filling the family-members' shoes, BOSS participants "wanted to give (the students) someone to hang out with ... have a good

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Salazar takes reigns of JMTC

by **Capt. JP REBELLO**
JMTC Public Affairs

"Brig. Gen. Salazar assumes a unique and prodigious responsibility today as he takes command of the Joint Multinational Training Command – the only place in the Army that trains with Joint, Multinational, and Coalition partners," said Gen. Carter F. Ham, commander of the U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army, Aug. 28. "I can tell you that he is well-prepared and ready for the challenge."

Ham addressed a crowd of German dignitaries, Grafenwoehr community members and U.S. Soldiers at the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Parade Field to welcome Brig. Gen. Steven L. Salazar as the new commander of the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command.

Salazar takes command of JMTC after commanding the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team as part of the Multinational Security Transition Command, Iraq.

"It is an honor and a privilege for me to stand here as the Commanding General of the Joint Multinational Training Command," said Salazar. "Having just re-deployed from a land where the trees are non-existent, the beauty of Bavaria is a welcome change."

Headquartered in Grafenwoehr, the 7th Army JMTC is the largest training command outside the continental United States. It provides a full spectrum of training for U.S. forces, NATO allies and multinational partners in Europe, Africa, and Asia.

"We are a country at war," said Salazar. "It is an ever-changing, complex battlefield that our Soldiers have to face. The speed with which JMTC can adapt its tactics, techniques and procedures to the

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Photo by Michael Beaton

Gen. Carter Ham (left), Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe, entrusts Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar (second from left) with the flag of the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command during an assumption of command ceremony on the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Parade Field Aug. 28. As the new 7th Army JMTC Commanding General, Salazar will oversee all Army training in Europe, as well as serve as the senior mission commander for Army communities in Bavaria.

Quick Hire for military spouses begins this month

by **GERRY J. GILMORE**
American Forces Press Service

Under a personnel rule that takes effect next month, some military spouses could be quickly hired for federal jobs without going through the usual competitive process.

The new hiring authority takes effect Sept. 11. The Office of Personal Management issued the authority's final regulatory guidelines Aug. 12. The guidelines are posted in the Federal Register under the title: "Noncompetitive Appointment of Certain Military Spouses."

The intended effect of the rule, according to documents listed in the Federal Register, "is to facilitate the entry of military spouses into the federal civil

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KONTAKT awards salute service

USAREUR Press Release

U.S. Army Europe showed its appreciation for 40 years of continued support to Soldiers and host communities during the 24th annual KONTAKT conference.

USAREUR is in transition, and KONTAKT Clubs are also changing to meet the needs of Americans across Germany, said Maj. Gen. Byron S. Bagby, USAREUR chief of staff, during an address at the conference's awards dinner.

The KONTAKT Club outreach program connects USAREUR Soldiers, family members and civilian employees to host nation citizens in communities where the Army has- or had - a presence, the general said.

"What I find very special are the clubs that are active in communities where there are no more U.S. Army facilities," he said.

The KONTAKT program, established in 1969,

brings American servicemembers, family members, civilian employees and German citizens together to provide opportunities to learn each about other's countries and cultures. KONTAKT Clubs sponsor U.S.-German community events, provide educational programs and support Soldiers and their families.

Membership in any of the 21 community-based groups is open to anyone willing to actively promote German-American friendship. The clubs operate under USAREUR guidance and German laws regarding nonprofit associations.

According to data from the USAREUR Public Affairs Office, there are currently about 2,000 KONTAKT members who provide approximately 80,000 volunteer hours annually to support stronger German-American relations through programs and special events reaching

See CLUBS Page 29

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



Your feedback through the AFC survey, Customer Service Assessment fosters improvement

We begin this month by welcoming our new senior commander, Brigadier General Steve Salazar.

His arrival comes at a key period as we prepare units from combat and review how well we are doing as a community.

There are two components to this vital community assessment that need all of our input: the Customer Management Assessment that reviews garrison services and USAREUR's Army Family Covenant (AFC) survey.

This past month, we provided the largest turnout for IMCOM-E's face-to-face AFC group sessions. Now we need to complete the CSA and AFC surveys to fully understand how we can improve.

Please go to our web at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil for both surveys.

The theme for this year's AFC is "Keeping the Promise." Some examples of AFC programs doing just that are the Exceptional Family Member Program Respite Care and Respite Child Care programs.

EFMP Respite Care provides a temporary rest period for Family Members who are responsible for the regular care of persons with disabilities. Qualifying Families are eligible to receive up to 40 hours of funded EFMP respite care monthly for each certified Family Member and can receive up to \$45

per hour for care.

IMCOM published guidelines that became effective last month for use of Fiscal Year 2009 EFMP respite care funds to further standardize and expedite service delivery.

Please contact our FMWR EFMP program director, Jay Velis at 476-2733 (CIV 09662-83-2733), to find out more about eligibility, allowable respite care hours and cost per month.

Respite Child Care is an FMWR CYSS program that offers a temporary break or time away for parents. Families of deployed Soldiers and Warriors in Transition are eligible to receive 16 free hours of child care (per child, per month).

September is also Suicide Prevention Month. Please read about one local Soldier's struggle with suicidal thoughts and seeking help on page 6.

Army Values include Personal Courage, and this informative article bravely shares a personal experience in order to encourage others to seek help.

Suicide prevention is something that we must remain vigilant about. We can remove the stigma of seeking mental health care through awareness and understanding.

We recently recognized our Year of the NCO by partnering German community leaders and Bundeswehr NCOs with some of our own NCOs and BOSS Soldiers at a community relations 'pig picking' on East Camp.

This successful German-American partnership event shared how we value our NCOs and single Soldiers. As a result, we have found new areas to enhance our



Photo by Florian Radeck

Community leaders and members admire the Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers awards Aug. 21 at a community relations 'pig picking' on East Camp. The event celebrated the Year of the Noncommissioned Officer by bringing together U.S. and Bundeswehr NCOs, as well as community leaders and BOSS members.

partnerships with our Bavarian counterparts.

We have bid farewell to two separate companies: the 12th Chemical Company (now at Schweinfurt), the 535th Engineer Support Company (now at Bamberg), and A Co, 2/66th MI (now at Hohenfels).

We also welcome home the last of our 15-month deployed units - Lt. Col. Roscoe and the members of HHC, 18th Combat

Sustainment Support Battalion.

These units and Soldiers have clearly shown what it means to be "Army Strong."

*Col. Chris Sorenson
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

CSM CORNER



Help us keep our battle buddies, children safe by reducing speed, staying 'strong'

I would first like to congratulate our Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program which was recognized Army-wide at the annual BOSS conference Aug 10-15.

Our program received first place for Best Event (large installation), and runner-up for Best Installation.

It is through the hard work and dedication of our Soldiers that the program continues to make strides.

I encourage all single Soldiers to get involved with BOSS. The next BOSS event will be held tomorrow - Country Night at 'The Zone' in Vilseck. There will also be a rafting trip this weekend and the BOSS Bash on the 25th of this month.

If you would like more information on upcoming events, call the garrison's BOSS president, Corporal Robert Shomper at DSN 475-8822.

We expect to see the USO Soldier Center, in which BOSS will be housed, open in the coming month as well.

The facility will offer a place to relax, use the internet, play video games, make phone calls and more.



The Army's 'I A.M. Strong' campaign gives us the tools needed to prevent sexual assault. We all have a duty to *Intervene* before an assault happens; *Act* on behalf of our fellow Soldier; and *Motivate* each other to prevent the crime of sexual assault. Sexual assault is a crime and will not be tolerated at this garrison.

As we relax on our off-time, however, I want to stress the importance of keeping yourself and your Battle Buddy safe.

The Army's 'I A.M. Strong' campaign gives us the tools needed to prevent sexual assault.

We all have a duty to Intervene before an assault happens; Act on behalf of our fellow Soldier; and Motivate each other to prevent the crime of sexual assault.

Even one incident of sexual assault is one too many. Sexual assault is a crime and will not be tolerated at this garrison.

Speeding will also not be tolerated. Speeding on post has become a growing concern not only with the Directorate of Emergency Services, but also within the Garrison communities.

Army in Europe Regulation 190-1 clearly outlines the

responsibilities of the Military Police to enforce all installation traffic rules.

Excessive speeds, as well as other violations are unacceptable for several reasons.

The key factor involved is the safety issue posed when driving at an excessive rate. Speed limits are established to maintain a safe environment for all Soldiers, civilians and Family Members.

As a community, we owe it to each other to abide by the regulations established, and make our post a safe place to raise our children.

As many of you have seen, while entering and exiting most gates on post, the posted speed limits drop to 10 KPH.

Understandably, our DES officials have received complaints, saying that this speed is too low

and that some individuals even have a hard time going that slow without stalling their vehicles.

This speed is used as a safety measure. The barriers in place are designed to rise if activated by our contract guards.

A person driving in excess of this speed limit could potentially find themselves involved in a traffic accident if the barrier is raised.

Another area of concern is the school zones.

Our children's safety is one of the focal points in the community.

Excessive speed will not be tolerated in these zones. While speed bumps have been put in place at the Grafenwoehr Elementary School, other schools will have Military Police patrols in place to ensure our community is strictly adhering to our posted

speed limits.

Ignorance to these speed limits is not an excuse.

While driving, pay attention to the changes in speed limits in order to prevent points from being assessed to your USAREUR driver's license.

Below is a list of posted speed limits in our school zones:

- Netzbarg Elementary/Middle School: 10 KPH
- Grafenwoehr Elementary School: 20 KPH
- Vilseck Elementary School: 20 KPH
- Vilseck High School: 30 KPH

In discussing the schools, I would like to welcome all the teachers and students back to the garrison.

We have not only top-notch staff, but top-notch students in our garrison, and I look forward to what the upcoming year will bring.

*Command Sgt. Maj.
William Berrios
CSM, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

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Question for the Command Group: Command Sponsorship

Dear Command Group,

My question pertains to keeping the unity and strength of soldier’s families in regards to communication and command sponsorship.

The army has made strides in providing a supportive environment for the families and has opened new avenues for its survival. From the perspective of an Army spouse, I would like the opportunity to ask a few questions.

Thank you in advance for this opportunity.

When my spouse was in Basic Training we received communication in the form of a letter and post card that informed of his safe arrival and a means of contact and information for the family should they ever need it. Basically, this communication kept the family involved and made them feel included as their main support system.

Now, worlds apart it is even more important to keep the unity and strength of the Soldier, spouse and family.

My Question for Command:

1. For the spouses and families whom are awaiting command sponsorship how are they currently being kept informed and included in their soldier’s community?
2. How are contact and or resource information from the command for the soldier’s family being distributed?
3. What programs are in place to include the spouse and family in their soldier’s new community that can be taken advantage of now?
4. What are the criteria for command sponsorship?
5. How can the soldier, spouse and family best prepare for command sponsorship? What documents are required of the soldier to initiate a command sponsorship?
6. What are the processes for command sponsorship once the soldier has arrived at their permanent change station? How long does the approval process takes?
7. What are some of the reasons a command sponsorship gets denied?
8. Upon approval of a command sponsorship is travel dependent on other soldiers families traveling to that area?

Thank you for your time and I hope that these questions can be of help and support for the incoming soldier, spouses and family.

Sincerely,
Verona Stephens
Army Spouse

Mrs. Stephens,

Thank you for your questions. Command sponsorship is an action that is initiated through the Soldier’s unit and basically authorizes the Soldier to move Family members into the community.

There are three organizations that work together to ensure a smooth transition: the Soldier’s unit, the Military Personnel Division and IMCOM-Europe.

Command sponsorship is a unit action that is requested by the new Soldier.

To facilitate this request, the unit has a team specifically designated to assist new Soldiers and family members, which consists of the unit commander and Family Readiness Liaison. This team tracks newly assigned personnel and assigns a sponsor to assist the new Soldiers upon their arrival into the community.

This person is selected on the basis of rank and family and should closely mirror the traits of the new Soldier. The idea is to provide the new troop with a direct point of contact who has experience in the community and can understand the new Soldier’s needs.

More information on the Family Readiness Group can be found at www.armyfrg.org.

As part of the community in-processing, the sponsor accompanies the new Soldier through a myriad of offices to include local banks and medical/dental offices. As part of this orientation, most sponsors will also take the new troop to the Army Community Services (ACS) Office in order to receive relocation packets and community information.

There are several requirements that a Soldier must meet before their family can be command sponsored. The Soldier must be able to serve on a 36-month tour of duty and the Soldier must have a minimum of 12 months remaining on the current tour in order to qualify; if not, the Soldier must be willing to extend to meet this 36-month tour requirement.

Once the new Soldier has decided to initiate a command sponsorship request, the unit personnel office, also called the “S-1”, will assist with building a formal packet.

The following documents are required in order to request command sponsorship:



Howe

completed DA FORM 4187 (Request for Personnel Action) endorsed by the Battalion Commander, copy of Enlisted Record Brief or Officer Record Brief, DA FORM 5888 (Family Member Deployment Screening Sheet), PCS Orders assigning the Soldier to the overseas community, marriage certificate, birth certificates (if applicable), copies of passports if family members are non-US citizens or local nationals and SOFA stamp card for restricted countries only.

Additionally, court custody documents must be provided when Soldiers are requesting command sponsorship for step-children.

Once the completed documents are submitted to the Military Personnel Division, approval of a command Sponsorship can take from three days to several weeks to process depending on the family’s current situation.

There are several reasons that the approval could be delayed or denied altogether. The most common processing delays are the result of an incomplete or inaccurate packet being submitted to the MPD and/or if the Soldier has a Family member enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program.

When that happens, the command sponsorship request must be forwarded to IMCOM-Europe Family Travel Branch for approval. Additional delays can also occur if the Soldier does not meet the tour length requirements, as listed above, and must first initiate a tour extension.

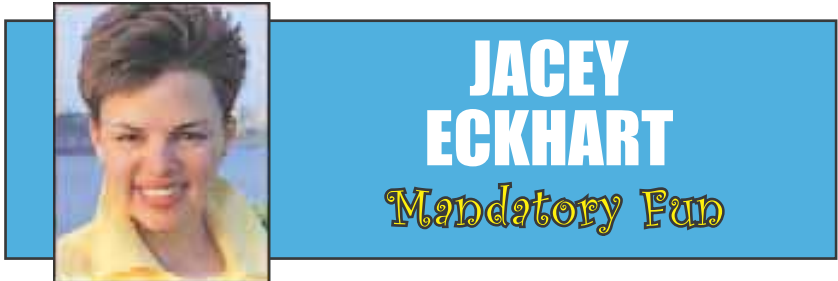
Upon approval of the command sponsorship request, the Soldier must request Deferred Family Travel Orders by completing a Travel Request Worksheet.

Approval of deferred family travel authorizes the Soldier’s family members to travel to the new community; however, this approval may take some time because travel dates are dependent upon the community’s housing vacancies.

Even though a Soldier may have an approved command sponsorship, family members may not be able to travel until housing is available. Current housing information can be found at the Army Housing Onestop Web site at <https://onestop.army.mil/>.

Wendy Howe
Deputy Chief,
Military Personnel Division

How to stop hating the military



**JACEY
ECKHART**
Mandatory Fun

Are you trying to change the way you feel about military life?

I’m not talking about turning yourself into one of those creepy women who seem to have no life outside their service member.

I’m talking about hitting that point in your Bitter Little Military Wife stage that you recognize your husband is a pretty good guy, really. That the high school boyfriend who just checked in with you on Facebook is still (ack!) living with his mom. That if you let yourself get any more bitter you are going to start tasting like bok choy. Coffee grounds. Ear wax.

Yup, you have clearly reached that point at which you know it would be helpful to your own happiness if you could magically change the way you feel about the demands of the military. Poof! But you have one problem, don’t you?

Deciding that you are sick and tired of being that BLMW and changing into a happier woman are two totally different things.

How do you change? I mean, really, really change. Change is no joke.

Think of the times you’ve tried to quit smoking, get organized, lose weight, exercise. The reason those four topics keep an entire fleet of

women’s magazines in business is because change doesn’t come just because you want it to come.

If it did, I would have substituted bok choy for Cheetos long ago and I’d weigh about nine pounds by now.

Understanding how human beings actually change their behavior is one of the most crucial skills military families learn. That’s why I was so intrigued by Alan Deutschman’s book “Change r Die.”

Deutschman is the executive director of Unboundary, a consulting firm that helps big business navigate change. When he researched change, he wasn’t really thinking about military spouses. Instead he looked at case studies of people who needed hardcore changes in their behavior.

He studied car companies with skyrocketing costs and drug users who kept being sent back to jail. He studied heart patients who had to eat cleaner and exercise more if they wanted to live another day.

What he found was that people usually think they can inspire change with what Deutschman calls the 3Fs: fear, facts and force.

For those drug users, those motivating factors would be the fear of going back to the soul-crushing misery of prison; the fact that people die from drug use; and the force of actually being locked up.

For we military families trying to

change how we feel about military life, the fear that you will be alone for the rest of your life whether you are married or not.

The fact that divorce rose from 2.5 percent of military marriages in 2001 to 3 percent in 2005. The force of refusing to move to a new duty station because your toddler likes her current daycare provider.

Surely fear, facts and force are enough to make anyone change. Surely five minutes in a prison shower should be enough to make an OxyContin habit seem like a bad, bad idea.

Surely the idea that you’d have to date guys who live with their mamas is enough to make your (Soldier) look a lot like Matthew McConaughey.

Except that they don’t. Fear, facts and force may make logical sense, but those things don’t actually motivate lasting change in our behavior. Instead, Deutschman observed that real change came with what he called the 3Rs: relate, reframe, repeat.

For the drug users, this meant that they lived in a working group home with other reformed drug users who quit using, found work they could do, made it through the day with some aplomb.

They reframed by learning to think of themselves as being part of a large extended family that had just

immigrated to a new community.

They repeated their new behaviors by acting as if they were not junkies every minute of every day for the months they took part in the program. They achieved change.

From my observations of military families, I’ve seen the bitterest of BLMWs find a relationship with

another spouse who was like them only happier.

Then they reframed their beliefs. They went from thinking that the military was something their Soldier or sailor inflicted on the family, to gathering evidence about how this military thing was who their guy was, not just what he did for a living.

Finally, they repeated this behavior constantly by acting as if they could carry on - even on the days they thought they

could not.

Hating the military is something many family members do. It’s part of our culture. But at a certain point, that hate, that resentment outlives its usefulness. We want to strip it off like a wool coat in August. That’s one of the times we military family members need to take the time to think through Deutschman’s 3Rs. We need to relate. Reframe. Repeat.

Until we can’t imagine life any other way.

Jacey Eckhart is a syndicated columnist for CinCHouse.com.

“Hating the military is something many family members do. It’s part of our culture. But at a certain point, that hate, that resentment outlives its usefulness.”

Do YOU have a question you’d like to ask the garrison command group?

Send questions to usaggnews@eur.army.mil with “Question for Command” in the subject line.

All questions will receive a response. Select questions will be published in upcoming issues of the Bavarian News.

Welcome Home 18th CSSB

Soldiers, family members reunite after 15-month deployment to Iraq

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Charles Byrd embraces his wife Jodie and two of their children at a re-deployment ceremony for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Aug. 29 at U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr. The children decorated and donned shirts with personal messages and photos for the occasion. Jodie Byrd said they survived the long deployment with lots of prayer.

Photos by Melissa Wolff



Above: Spouses and children begin to cheer as they catch a first glimpse of their loved ones, Soldiers of the 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company, entering the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr field house Aug. 29 at their re-deployment ceremony. The 18th CSSB deployed 77 personnel to provide command and control over 700 National Guard, reserve and active duty Soldiers who provided Combat Service Support to over 15,000 Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines located between Forward Operating Base Q-West and FOB Marez in northern Iraq. The company, who completed one of the Army's last 15-month deployments, sustained no injuries or casualties during the tour.

U.S. Army Europe names Soldier, noncommissioned officer for 2009

Grafenwoehr-based Soldier, NCO take top honors

Story and photo by
Sgt. DANIEL J. NICHOLS
USAREUR Public Affairs

A Grafenwoehr military police Soldier from U.S. Army Europe's 21st Theater Sustainment Command and a senior noncommissioned officer from the Grafenwoehr's Joint Multinational Training Command were named as the 2009 USAREUR and Seventh Army Soldier of the Year and NCO of the Year in a ceremony held in Heidelberg, Aug. 27.

Spc. Daniel Micek of the 18th

Spc. Daniel Micek, 21st Theater Sustainment Command's 18th Military Police Brigade, takes off running after low-crawling under barbed wire on the obstacle course during the 2009 U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army Soldier of the Year and NCO of the Year competition Aug. 13. Micek went on to be named USAREUR's 2009 Soldier of the Year.



Military Police Brigade is the 2009 USAREUR Soldier of the Year and Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Beckman of the 7th Army NCO Academy is the 2009 USAREUR NCO of the Year.

"I told them (the competitors) when this thing started that you're going to be tried, and you're going to be tested, and it will probably be one of the hardest things you ever do at this point in your military career," said USAREUR Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Beam during the ceremony.

Beckman and Micek will go on to represent USAREUR in the Army's

Best Warrior Competition at Fort Lee, Va., in September, where they will compete with winners from the Army's major commands.

Beam said a few months ago Gen. Carter Ham, USAREUR's commanding general, told him to spare no effort or expense in finding USAREUR's top warriors.

"Sergeant major, we're going to pick our warrior. We're going to pick our champion that is going to go forth and represent us at DA," Beam said the general told him.

The result was the competition at the Grafenwoehr Training Area in which the Micek and Beckman earned their titles earlier this month.

The competition put 11 USAREUR Soldiers' physical, mental and warrior skills to the test over four grueling days of nearly non-stop challenges.

A full story about the competition is available from the USAREUR home page, [www.http://www.hqusareur.army.mil/news/releases/2009-08-17-02_SOY.pdf](http://www.hqusareur.army.mil/news/releases/2009-08-17-02_SOY.pdf).

The Aug. 9-13 competition was designed to tax each contender's stamina and capabilities, as well as prepare the winners for the Army-level competition, said Sgt. Maj. Michael Kennedy of JMTC's operations division, who designed many of the tasks for event.

"The competitor that we're looking for to send to the Army level is the one that is very good at dealing with fatigue, physical and mental," Kennedy said during the competition. "The Soldier that can operate on minimum amounts of rest and information for long periods of time and still remember to do the little things even when they're tired, sore and not real happy about the



Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Beckman, Joint Multinational Training Command, performs first aid on a pair of simulated casualties Aug. 11 during the 2009 USAREUR and Seventh Army Best Warrior Competition. Beckman went on to win the competition and be named USAREUR's NCO of the Year.

situation they're in."

While at times they might have found it hard to work up some enthusiasm during the competition, the winners said they're honored to earn their titles and excited to move on to the next level.

"This is a tremendous honor right now," Micek said. "Not many people dream of it. Some people think they can do it, but like the sergeant major told us, we actually did it. And this is a huge honor, meeting everybody that competed ... and an honor to represent

USAREUR."

"I'm really excited to represent all the fine NCOs and Soldiers from the JMTC and from USAREUR," Beckman added. "I'm just hoping I can continue to drive forward and represent well when I get to Fort Lee."

He said his plans are to "train, train, train" between now and then, including preparing with Micek.

"I'll give all I've got for that one," Micek said. "There's nothing after that, so there's nothing to hold back."

2SCR Soldier overcomes suicidal ideations, encourages others to reach out, get help

by MARY MARKOS

Editor

Capt. Emily Stehr, a physical therapist with the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, is in the business of healing. But five months after returning from Iraq, she was struggling with her own internal wounds of war that had not healed. She decided to kill herself.

What stopped Stehr was not the physical pain she would have endured, but the realization of the emotional pain she would inflict on the children of her close friends when their parents would tell them, "Aunt Emily is not around because she killed herself."

"I was not willing to put that pain on those children," Stehr said. "I'd inflict the pain on my mom, my dad, all my other loved ones, but those kids, I can't do it."

What Stehr did do was check into Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and began the process of healing.

"I like to think of (suicide) like cancer. I did not even know I was sick. I just kept waiting for me to return to normal, and it never happened. Stuff kept escalating until it was either, I'll be dead or I'll get treatment.

"Looking back I can see the whole process, but when you're going through something like that, you're so blind because you're in 'you shell'," Stehr said.

Part of her healing process was coming out of her shell and finding what she called the 'tumor' or reason for her emotional pain and suicidal thoughts.

"I had to go back and rout out what was causing the maladaptive behavior, the tumor. Ultimately, unless you deal with that, it's always going to plague you. You have to deal with it head-on," Stehr said.

Dealing with the cause of her suicidal ideations meant dealing with the anger, grief and emotional pain Stehr said she felt after physically leaving Iraq.

"For me, it was an accumulative trauma - watching patients die," Stehr said. "I had a patient kill himself. We lost 33 people when we were down there. It is hard to see again and

again and again ... In my mind, I never really left Iraq."

Stehr said part of her struggle to return to her 'pre-deployment' self included overcoming the stigma associated with seeking mental health and discussing suicide.

"Nobody really wants to talk about suicide. People don't know what to say," Stehr said. "There's shame ... embarrassment. I really thought that I was weak. I bought into the whole stigma that people who are suicidal or have mental issues are weak," Stehr said.

The Department of the Army has acknowledged the stigma associated with seeking mental health and has taken steps to combat it and suicide in the ranks.

Although the number of suicides in the U.S. Army Europe rose from four in calendar year 2007, to seven in calendar year 2008, the effects of the Army's efforts to reduce and eliminate the stigma with seeking mental health were evident in an informal poll taken at the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Aug. 25.

Fifty-one percent of nearly 60 Soldiers polled said there is no longer a stigma associated with seeking help.

Sixty-two percent of Soldiers polled said that individuals who seek mental help are not seen as weak, with one Soldier attributing this to "the change in Army culture."

It is a change, said 2SCR Regimental Commander Col. James Blackburn that starts with the leadership.

"Fundamentally, as leaders, we have to recognize there's a challenge, and in this case the challenge is cultural. We are in the profession of change, changing the culture," he said.

With the cultural change, Blackburn and 2SCR leadership supported Stehr in her decision to talk to others about her suicidal ideations.

"I strongly feel Emily's brave move to share her story with the public is exactly what the Army needs to decrease the stigma associated with seeking help. By stepping forward, she is showing other Soldiers they are not alone and

It has nothing to do with being strong or being weak, you're sick. The correct philosophy is that you're a human, and sometimes crap happens, and you have pain. But you need to deal with your pain. Get help when you need it. Take care of yourself emotionally, mentally, psychologically. It's going to make you a better Soldier.

Capt. Emily Stehr

2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment



Courtesy photo

Capt. Emily Stehr, a physical therapist with the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, contemplated committing suicide after returning from Iraq. She shares her story with others in hope they will see that reaching out for help is not only okay, it makes you a better Soldier.

it is okay to talk about what is troubling them," Blackburn said.

"We've got to make people understand ... scars, you've got them; I've got them; we've all got them. Some are visible. Some are not visible. Everybody deserves a chance to be successful.

"Part of that is tearing down the stigma associated with any illness, any scar, that you incur while in the Army, or even before you came in. You are ours now, and will put you in a position to be successful," said Blackburn.

And Stehr said talking mental illness and suicide is the only way to prevent others from taking their life.

"It has nothing to do with being strong or being weak, you're sick," Stehr said. "The correct philosophy is that you're a human, and sometimes crap happens, and you have pain. But you need to deal with your pain. Get help when you need it. Take care of yourself emotionally, mentally, psychologically. It's going to make you a better Soldier."

Blackburn agreed.

"(Soldiers who seek help) are strong. They're strong because they are able to examine themselves and know there's something wrong. Most people generally don't say, 'I have a problem.' And these folks this population of

our Soldiers are strong because they have the fortitude to do a self-examination, and they know the result. They don't conceal it, they let it out. That's a strong population, not a weak one," he said.

To stay strong, Stehr said all Soldiers need to offer support and be willing to listen and talk. Stehr further said that it is not as easy as just asking someone if they are going to hurt themselves.

"It is never that easy. There is no easy about any of this. Encourage that person and be there for them. The more we talk about it, the better off we are," Stehr said.

Blackburn encourages Soldiers to reach out and get the help they need. "If you are hurting in some way, if something's on your heart, or something's on your mind, reach out ... We want you to reach out.

"If you hold it in, it won't do you any good. It won't do your immediate family any good. It won't do your extended family any good. And it certainly won't do your battle buddy any good. We are here to help you," Blackburn said.

Soldiers in need of help can call the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr chaplain hotline at CIV 0162-296-0838. To read more stories of Soldiers who speaking out about suicide, visit www.realwarriors.net.

Netzaberg mother delivers baby boy along B470

by AMY NEWCOMB

Bavarian News

"How often do you have to convince your husband you are having a baby, it's coming, there's no stopping, it's not like you can just tell it to hold on, cross your legs, it's just not time yet" Melanie Lasley said.

Melanie never thought when they moved to Grafenwoehr in January that she would deliver her own baby on the side of the road in a foreign country.

When she woke up at 3 a.m. on July 29th feeling sick, she had no idea she was having labor pains.

"I didn't put the two together until about 5 a.m., I got on the internet and read stories about women who didn't realize they were in labor" Melanie said.

The labor pains started to get intense at 5:30 a.m. so she woke up her husband, Lt. Col. Paul Lasley, senior chaplain for U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr.

The Lasley's called their neighbor and friend, Joy Chun, to come over and look after their other three children so they could go to the hospital.

"[Joy] arrived in probably less than 10 minutes from when we called her" Paul said. Once Chun arrived, they grabbed Melanie's suitcase and headed out the door.

When they got inside their van, Melanie's water broke. "I wish I had

gotten the leather seats instead of being cheap" Paul said jokingly.

They left Netzaberg but had to make a decision at the Eschenbach exit. "I think we need to go to the Eschenbach hospital, I'm think I'm going to have this baby" said Melanie. Paul thought they could make it to Weiden.

As they were driving to Weiden, Melanie insisted that Paul pull over, she knew she was not going to make it to the hospital in time.

"We were right past OBI when he crowned on the B470" Paul said. They pulled over at an intersection with a road sign telling them it was 17 kilometers to Weiden and 13 kilometers back to Eschenbach.

Paul jumped out of their van at the intersection and flagged down a German man on his way to work. He asked the man to call an ambulance for his wife who was about to give birth. "I never got his name, I don't know how to thank him but he spoke very good English and was very accommodating" Paul said. The unknown man stayed until the ambulance arrived 15 minutes later.

After Paul had made sure that an ambulance was on the way he went back to the van and found his wife holding their newborn son, Zachariah Vance Lasley.

Melanie had delivered her own baby at 6:05 a.m. "The delivery was easy, it was the labor that was



Left: Melanie Lasley holds son Zachariah, who she delivered in the front seat of the family's car while on the way to the hospital.

Below: Crossroads sign between Weiden and Eschenbach where Melanie Lasley gave birth to son Zachariah.

Courtesy photos



excruciating" Melanie said.

Melanie and Zachariah were taken by ambulance to Weiden hospital where they stayed for four days. Zachary weighed 9 pounds 1 ounce and was 19 inches long.

"He was so big he had blood sugar problems so we ended up staying a little bit longer to make sure that everything was okay.....everything was okay" Melanie said.

The Lasley's family and friends were shocked to learn of Zachariah's

impromptu roadside birth.

"They just assumed that Paul delivered and I was in the back seat of the van....But I was in the front seat of the van and took my own baby and put him on my shoulder" Melanie said. "I just prayed to God and he saw us through it."

This was Paul's first time to be home for an entire pregnancy due to deployments. "I've been gone for at least half if not most of all the other pregnancies....I didn't know it was

this hard" Paul said.

Melanie was thankful that he could be home to help during this pregnancy because it was the hardest. "It seemed like with each pregnancy [labor time] was cut in half" Melanie said.

The Lasley's other children, Ruth, 9, Caleb, 6, and Sarah, 2, were happy that their mother had Zachariah during the summer so they would have a chance to play with their new brother before school started. Zachariah was 2 weeks and 2 days early.

Moving brings choices, time restrictions when filing claims for property damage

by **BRADLEY J. HUESTIS**
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, JMTC

With the end of the summer permanent change of station cycle, all service members and civilian personnel who recently arrived should note these important deadlines for filing claims for property damaged, destroyed, or lost during moves. Under the new Full Replacement Value program, claimants can choose to file their claim either through an Army claims office or directly with the carrier.

Filing directly with carrier

With the FRV program, if claimants file their claim directly upon the carrier within nine months of delivery, the carrier will settle the claim by repairing or paying to repair damaged items.

For items that are lost or destroyed, the carrier will either replace the item with a new item, or pay the full, undepreciated replacement cost. A few large items like pianos, organs, motorcycles and vehicles, as well as firearms and objects of art, are not covered by FRV.

In some cases, the carrier cannot replace some missing items with new ones. These are items that have value because of their age, such as collectible figurines, antiques, collectible plates, baseball cards, comic books, and coin and stamp collections. On a full replacement value claim, the carrier is liable for the greater of \$5,000 per shipment or \$4 times the net weight of the shipment (in pounds), up to a maximum limit of \$50,000.

If claimants believe the full replacement value of their property is more than \$50,000, they may be able to obtain additional FRV coverage at their own expense from a private insurance company or from the carrier, if the carrier offers additional coverage.

In addition, if they file their claims directly with the carrier within nine months of delivery, the carrier will be responsible for obtaining all repair cost from reputable repair firms or replacement estimates when not repairable. If the claim is filed more than nine months after delivery, the carrier will only pay the depreciated replacement cost or repair cost, whichever is less.

If claims are filed directly with the carrier by mail, claimants should send claims to the carrier by certified mail so that there is a record of the date on which the claim was submitted.

When the carrier receives the claim, it will have up to 60 days to pay, deny or make a final written offer. Once they have settled the claim, the carrier will have 30 days to make the payment.

Filing with an Army claims office

If new residents decide to file their claim directly with an Army claims office, they must give up their right to have the carrier settle the claim on the basis of full replacement value.

The Army claims office will settle the claim by paying the depreciated replacement or repair cost, whichever is less.

Claimants must submit Form 1840R to the claims office within 70 days of the date the property was delivered. DD Form 1840R (the pink form captioned "Notice of Loss or Damage") is the reverse of the DD Form 1840 that was filled out when movers delivered the belongings. Residents should be sure to unpack and inspect everything in plenty of time to file notice.

Completing the form properly and filing it timely are critical to preserving your claim for two reasons.

First, the claims office cannot pay claimants for items that are not listed on Form 1840R.



New residents have nine months to file a property damage claim directly with the carrier under the Full Replacement Value program and two years to file a claim with an Army claims office.

Courtesy photo

Second, if the Form 1840R is not filed within 70 days, the claims office must deduct the amount that the government could have recovered from the carrier from any amount payable to claimants on their claim.

This deduction for lost potential carrier recovery will almost always equal or exceed the value of the items being claimed, resulting in no payment for those items of which the government received tardy notice.

Be mindful that the armed services' claims programs are funded mostly by recovering money from private carriers who break and lose things, not by tax dollars.

Filing the DD Form 1840R is only the first step in perfecting a claim. Claimants must submit their completed claim on DD Form 1842, Claim For Loss or Damage To Personal Property Incident To Service, and DD Form 1844, List Of Property And Claim Analysis Chart, within two years of the date your property was delivered.

This two-year period was established by act of Congress and cannot be waived. The claims office must also have the inventory, estimates, certificate of non-insurance, government bill of lading, orders and attendant documents before it can adjudicate the claim.

Claimants must file separate claims for each shipment (household goods, hold baggage and POV).

If residents suffer damage to property that may be compensable by the Army, they should contact the local claims office promptly.

For assistance with claims, call: Ansbach Law Center, DSN 467-2104, CIV 09802-832-104; Bamberg Law Center, DSN 469-8411, CIV 0951-300-8411; Grafenwoehr Law Center, DSN 475-8428, CIV 09641-838-428; Hohenfels Law Center, DSN 466-2401, CIV 09472-832-401; Schweinfurt Law Center, DSN 353-8809, CIV 09721-968-809; Vilseck Law Center, DSN 476-2240, CIV 09662-832-240.

U.S. Forces ration card program ushers in technology

IMCOM-E Press Release

In a change to bring the U.S. Forces ration card issue process in line with technology, U.S. Army Installation Management Command-Europe Region officials said that ration cards will undergo a makeover.

According to Lanny Hall, IMCOM-Europe personnel services chief, the ration card process is transitioning from typewriters to web-based forms and will change size and color.

"The principal reason for the change is to take the issuance process from the typewriter to the PC and laser printer," said Hall. "The change mandates that we have to make a format change from the current long, skinny edition, and we

also changed the color of the card to make it more visibly distinctive from the current edition."

Liz Suarez, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr, Military Personnel Division, issues ration cards to certain units in the Grafenwoehr community. According to Suarez the change will benefit both personnel who issue the ration cards and those receiving them. "They are a different color, better material and they are supposed to last a little longer....it is easier for us to issue them now because we do it on the computer which is quicker" Suarez said.

The ration card color will change from blue to yellow, said Hall, adding that the change affects all U.S. Forces

ration card holders in Europe. Yellow cards should start being issued in June. Individuals who currently have the blue ration cards will keep them. When the time comes to replace ration cards, individuals will receive a new yellow ration card.

"It's important people realize that the blue cards are still good until they expire. Keep using them," said Hall.

The new web-based process, said Hall, adds efficiency to the service process.

In the past, customers would wait as a service provider plucked away at a typewriter to complete the ration card. Now, when customers obtain a new, replacement or renewal ration card, service providers will fill out an

on-line form and print the ration card on 8-1/2 by 11-inch paper.

"This new process will enable service providers to rapidly complete the ration forms and easily fix errors on the spot," said Hall.

According to Suarez, the online form that will be used by service providers to create the new ration cards is already filled out. There are only 2 blocks on the form that have to be changed when someone comes in for a new one. "All I have to do is input the expiration date to the date on their ID Cards and their name and I go ahead and print it....everything is already there" Suarez said. "It takes about 2 minutes to get someone in and out."

The one thing that will remain

the same, though, is the ever-baffling riddle of how to fold the ration card.

"That is something that people struggle with, like folding a map. But in a way, folding up a ration card is an iconic piece of being stationed in Europe," said Hall. "The new ration card will be slightly wider than the current edition and will contain folding instructions. Although the folding can still be a little tricky, the new ration card format will continue to accommodate easy wallet storage and retrieval."

For more about U.S. Forces ration cards, contact the USAG Grafenwoehr ration card office at DSN 475-6881.

Bavarian News reporter Amy Newcomb contributed to this article.

SLOW DOWN

The Grafenwoehr Military Police will be conducting speed enforcement operations in the vicinity of all garrison DODEA schools. The following posted speed limits will be strictly enforced:

- **Netzaberg Elementary/Middle school complex - 10 KPH**
- **Grafenwoehr Elementary - 20 KPH**
- **Vilseck Elementary - 20 KPH**
- **Vilseck High School - 30 KPH**

All violators will be ticketed. Questions can be directed to Sgt. First Class Leonard Warth at DSN 476-2590.



Respite care offers families valuable rest

by **ROB McILVAINE**
Special to the Bavarian News

For Army families who are responsible for regular care of persons with disabilities, the Exceptional Family Member Program Respite Care Program provides a temporary rest period for caregivers.

The EFMP puts respite care in place when needed for eligible families of active Army and active Army National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers.

Sharon Fields, a program manager for FMWRC Respite Care Services, said the Army hopes to inform families worldwide about respite care opportunities.

"Our primary goal is to ensure consistency and continuity of our respite care program, regardless of where our Soldiers and families are located," Fields said. "Special needs care is around the clock. When a family has a special needs child or adult, respite care provides a break for the primary caregiver."

Families can apply for the Respite Care Program at the nearest Army Community Service EFMP office. Eligibility for the program is based on EFMP enrollment

and the medical or educational condition of the family member requiring care.

Qualifying families are eligible to receive up to 40 hours of funded EFMP respite care monthly for each certified family member and can receive up to \$45 per hour for care.

During fiscal years 2007 and 2008, FMWRC received \$8.2 million in supplemental funds for EFMP respite care. In FY '09, respite care has been included in the base operating funds for ACS and is no longer funded by supplemental funds.

The Army Installation Management Command published revised guidelines for use of FY '09 EFMP respite care funds June 11, to further standardize and expedite service delivery Army-wide. These guidelines became effective Aug. 3.

Contact the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation EFMP program director, Jay Velis at DSN 476-2733, CIV 09662-83-2733, to find out more about eligibility, allowable respite care hours and cost per

Special needs care is around the clock. When a family has a special needs child or adult, respite care provides a break for the primary caregiver.

Sharon Fields
FMWRC Respite Care Service

month.
Rob McIlvaine writes for Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation Command public affairs.

Garrison Military Police at home on the range with Garmisch Polizei force

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. JERAME J. STOFFER
USAG Garmisch DES

It's probably been a while in Garmisch since the last time anyone heard of the garrison's Military Police and local Polizei conducting joint weapons training at the same range.

In most cases, joint weapons training for Soldiers is done with the Bundeswehr so their Edelweiss Gebirgsjäger, or mountain soldiers, can earn American marksmanship badges. Likewise, and American Soldiers can attempt to earn the German Army marksmanship award at a Schützenschnur.

This range, however, was unique. U.S. Army MPs assigned to the U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Directorate of Emergency Services and German police officers serving the Garmisch-Partenkirchen community conducted joint tactical movements on a live-fire range, followed by a familiarization with each other's weapons and one-on-one rapid-fire drills.

According to the Soldiers involved, Americans and Germans hoped to get to know each others weapons for reasons of personnel safety, to ease working together in law enforcement, and to boost international camaraderie.

While career MPs feel more comfortable

knowing that they have a solid working partnership with the local Polizei, all participants were willing to give up off-duty time to train together and learn each other's tactics.

The garrison MPs received training on 7.62 caliber sniper rifles and 9 mm pistols used only in Bavaria, while the German Police qualified on the M-16 rifles and Beretta 9 mm automatics used by American troops.

At the end of the day the German Police took home Army marksmanship badges that generally only the Bundeswehr are afforded the opportunity to earn.

Unlike the German military, the Polizei

aren't authorized to wear the American badges on their official uniforms, but according to these counterpart cops, simply earning the badge and qualification papers are enough.

Both Soldiers and Polizei said everyone took home a different experience, new ideas and new friendships.

Serving overseas, MPs are able to form bonds and partnerships as fellow police officers with the local Polizei.

Because the language barrier sometimes must be overcome without the use of an interpreter, having strong teamwork and cooperation helps to achieve the mutual goals of keeping the public safe.

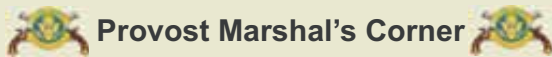


Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy S. Herring, Garmisch Provost Sergeant, instructs two Garmisch Polizei officers firing the Army's 9 mm Beretta automatic pistol.



Spec. Justin L. Bengel, a member of the Garmisch Military Police, receives instructions on the Polizei 7.62 mm rifle.

GARRISON SNAPSHOTS



Provost Marshal's Corner

Automated pedestrian gate opens for business

by **Cpt. SCOTT WOIDA**

Provost Marshal, USAG Garmisch DES

I am pleased to report that the automated pedestrian gate, located on Artillery Kaserne (near Army Lodging, Building 258), is open for use. This gate will allow walkers to enter and exit the Kaserne along Aussere Maximilianstrasse; a nice shortcut if you're going to the employee housing, catching a city bus, or walking up Kramer Mountain.

This automated gate is a new piece of technology and will take a bit of "getting used to." Special instructions are also available at the gate for families with small children or strollers. Instructions are posted in English, German and Russian to assist you, if needed. The gate has an automated voice, in English, which can also guide you through the process.

If you have any issues, or you are requested to call security; the call will go directly to the Military Police Desk. Please take directions from the Desk Sergeant as he helps you gain access to post while following the steps required by the automated gate. The door leading off post can be opened by anyone inside the gate, so you will not be stuck inside.

I ask that you practice patience when using the gate for the first few times. It requires time to process some commands that may lead to minor delays. Entry and exit, however, will be a breeze once you become familiar with the process.

With school starting this week, please keep traffic safety in mind while traveling to and from work. Help us set a good example for our community children by following the posted speed limits and wearing the proper safety gear while on motorcycles and bicycles. Together we can make this garrison a safer and more secure place to live and work.

Feedback: Let me know how we are doing. Go online and fill out an Interactive Customer Evaluation form at the Garmisch Garrison website www.garmisch.army.mil or fill one out in person at the Garmisch Military Police Station located on Artillery Kaserne in building 209. These evaluations let me know how we can better serve you. Please include a name and contact information if you wish to receive a personal response. Thank you for your service.



Left: Children play under a backdrop of mountains during the U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch chapel's Vacation Bible School.



Below left: Soldiers of O Troop, 4th Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment out of Vilseck conduct a standard combat patrol on Artillery Kaserne during a random patrol for increased vigilance. The troopers are becoming a familiar sight in Garmisch at all of the American kasernes with more frequent patrols. Germany and the U.S. are working together to keep the community safe; Bundeswehr from the Musikkorps share the kaserne with American Soldiers who work at the garrison and the George C. Marshall Center on Sheridan Kaserne.

Photos by John Reese

Students, graduates with disabilities team up with government employers

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

By the time her senior year at the College of Charleston was ending in 2009, Annie Chambers was losing hope of finding a full time job. She was flying to New York and Washington, D.C. on the weekends for interviews, but said the less than

Annie Chambers shoots footage around post for a “Welcome to Hohenfels” video. Chambers has spent the summer working for the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Public Affairs Office through the Workforce Recruitment Program, a Department of Labor centrally funded program that connects federal sector employers with postsecondary students and recent graduates with disabilities.



promising job market in the United States had prompted her to research other options. Enter the Workforce Recruitment Program. A Department of Labor centrally funded program, the WRP connects federal sector employers with postsecondary students and recent graduates with disabilities. After an interview with a program

recruiter, Chambers’ information was entered into a database accessible by, among many others, Equal Employment Offices throughout the Department of the Army. Troy Darr, public affairs officer for U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels, contacted Alma Molina, Hohenfels EEO program manager, about hiring someone through the WRP to complete special projects his staff had not had time to tackle. Molina searched the database for candidates who might match Darr’s needs. Chambers was one of them. Three months later, both Darr and Chambers are grateful they chose to participate in the program. “I am absolutely glad I did it. It has been a great out of college first experience. I couldn’t have asked for anything better,” said Chambers. “Especially at Hohenfels, it finally feels as if I am finally in the real world. I’ve had four un-paid internships so I know what it’s like to be babied and I didn’t want that.” Though she had to pay for her own ticket to Germany, as a WRP employee Chambers was paid a salary commiserate with her education and experience. Like the eight other WRP interns working for U.S. Army Europe and Installation Management Command-Europe this summer, Chambers also needed to find housing (she received a housing allowance) as well as arrange for transportation, all of which she said Molina went “above and beyond” to assist with. The experience, while a bit of a culture shock, has been a valuable one, Chambers said.

After a summer renting a room from a German family with three children about her age, she said: “It has been amazing and I wouldn’t have it any other way. I’ve gotten to travel with them; I made friends; I ate German food. I even had a conversation with someone in German the other day.” While spending the summer learning about the German culture, Chambers also had to learn about the Army culture. “After doing internships in corporate America, I know that world. Working for the military every day I asked a lot of questions,” she said, adding that learning to operate in a new environment has honed her adaptive skills. Chamber’s positive experience with the WRP has been a positive one for Darr also. “It has been great. Annie was able to work with minimum supervision. I gave her a project to complete and she ran with it,” said Darr, who explained that Chambers has been working on projects he has wanted to complete for some time but has not had the man power to begin. According to Kym McRae-Haeffner, Hohenfels EEO program specialist, that is one of the highlights for supervisors. “It’s advantageous for both the student and the employer because you’re able to fill a position that doesn’t come out of your budget. You get someone from a pre-screened DOL referral pool that can work on special projects or on-going projects that need help,” she said, adding that not only does it not cost supervisors anything, it also takes very little time on their part. “If you look at the time I put into it versus what we got out of it, the return

is huge,” said Darr, who said to hire Chambers he needed only to provide Molina with a job description, then sort through the potential candidates she found for him from the database. Though it requires little time and no money on the part of the supervisor, Wanda Watson-Mays, WRP coordinator for USAREUR, said she thinks some managers are still wary of hiring a student or recent graduate with a disability. “Disability doesn’t mean inability,” said Watson-Mays. “We’re trying to shift some paradigms here.” Chambers, who was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in High School, said for her, it is a matter of learning to work around her disability. “I will get it done and I will get it done well, it’s just a little harder to stay on task sometimes,” said Chambers. “I don’t think people here even know I have a disability. It’s nice that they don’t judge you for anything.” To ease any misgivings employers might have about hiring someone with a disability, Watson-Mays stressed two things: first, that each applicant in the WRP database is extremely qualified, and two, that “just like any other federal employee, if they don’t work out you can let them go.” “Some people in the database I saw have two PhDs, or two PhDs and a law degree but have trouble finding a job. This program is just one vehicle to get qualified people with disabilities gainfully employed,” said Watson-Mays. Supervisors interested in the WRP should contact their EEO for more information.

Sergeant major reflects on women’s equality

by **KRISTIN BRADLEY**
Bavarian News

It was not long ago in our nation’s short history that American women lacked the right to vote. Almost 89 short years later an active-duty female Soldier in the United States Army stood in front of a group of men and women at the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels dining facility to speak about the importance of the 19th Amendment. Addressing the crowd at the Hohenfels Women’s Equality Day celebration Aug. 20, Sgt. Maj. Carleen Williams called the women’s suffrage movement that began at the first women’s rights convention in Seneca Falls, N.Y. in 1848, “the mother of all (civil rights) movements of the 60’s and 70’s.” Established by congress in 1971, Women’s Equality Day commemorates the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment that gave women the right to vote. “Women who sought a change, even if they didn’t see the results in their lifetime,” were

“We must look ... to the history of the many women and men who made it possible for us today.”
Sgt. Maj. Carleen Williams, Command Paralegal NCO of the Staff Judge Advocate, JMRC

the driving force behind the entirely peaceful movement that changed the future of the nation, said Williams. “We must look ... to the history of the many women and men who made it possible for us today to put the words women and equality in the same sentence,” she said. Currently serving as the command paralegal noncommissioned officer for the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at the Joint Multinational Training Command, Williams said the Army has held an important role in advancing women’s equality. “It continues to reaffirm the term (women’s equality) in a functional way,” she said, citing both the formation of the Women’s Army Corps in 1943 and its disbandment into the regular Army in 1978. Though the WAC was incorporated in the

regular Army little more than 30 years ago, Williams said the Army and its female Soldiers continue to push women’s equality forward. Having deployed to Iraq three times herself, in Desert Storm in 1990-1991 and in Operation Iraqi Freedom-1 and OIF-3, Williams said the presence of women in combat is itself a powerful testament. “Just by having a presence in a combat environment ... we are helping to promote worldwide equality and diversity,” she said as she showed the audience a photo of a female Soldier with a young Iraqi girl. “In this way it can truly be said that we honor those women who struggled for gender equality with each new generation we free from the tyranny of gender oppression,” said Williams.

Though as important as it is to acknowledge what both the Army and female Soldiers have accomplished for female equality, Williams said more than anything women just want to be judged for what they can do, not what gender they are. Though she is usually the only female in a room, Williams said she thinks first about the task at hand and what knowledge she has to offer the Army, not about being a woman, though she also acknowledged that what she has to offer the Army may come in part from her gender. “Having a female in the group (of mostly men) adds to the overall thinking, it might bring about more ideas,” said Williams. As a female sergeant major, she said it is important to her to be visible within the community. “There aren’t very many (female SGMs), so I want to be out there. I want to show men that there are female sergeant majors out there and I want women to see me and maybe think, ‘I could be like her.’”

First local national attends Civilian Education System course

by **KRISTIN BRADLEY**
Bavarian News

Though she already holds a degree in business management and economics from the State University of New York, when Vesna Gaddy saw an opportunity to attend a course to hone her business leadership skills, she said she jumped at the chance. Gaddy, a Property Book Office supply technician is the first local national employee from Hohenfels to attend a Civilian Education System course since the benefit was extended to local nationals last year. The CES, part of the Army Management Staff College, represents a series of courses that aims to educate those that support Soldiers, with the ultimate goal of a workforce capable of providing exemplary mission support. According to CES publications, “Army civilians will become multi-faceted civilian leaders of the 21st century who personify the warrior ethos in all aspects, from war-fighting support to statesmanship and business

management.” For two weeks Gaddy attended the Basic Course in Ft. Leavenworth, Kan. with 150 other students in her session. Having taught leadership courses herself during a previous job in human resources, Gaddy said she was impressed with the layout of the course. “I really, really liked the course,” said Gaddy. “Normally leadership courses are all about theory, but with this one the theory was covered online (before arriving in Kansas), so when I got there right from the start we were assigned a group. Everything was about group work and it was very hands on.” The student centered, problem based, experiential curriculum is designed to raise student’s awareness of their leadership style and develop teamwork, communication and leadership skills. For example, Gaddy said the second day into the course each group was given an assignment that was kept as vague as possible. She and her group had to figure out not only what the

assignment was exactly, but also how to complete it. She said the exercise allowed the instructors to see how the students would interact with people they had just met, what each person’s leadership style was and how they would work together as a group. “You were on your toes from the first day on. The tasks were as vague as possible. It lets the instructors see how people adapt. Are you going to withdraw or contribute? It was pretty tense, but you learn a lot about yourself,” Gaddy said. Students then get feedback from the instructors who help them use those lessons to improve their performance. At Hohenfels Gaddy works on a team of six people who manage the property book for the garrison, which includes about 130 hand receipts for items issued to garrison personnel. “(The CES course) gave me some tools to help me adapt to situations. This is a customer service position so our goal is to do our services as quickly and as seamlessly as possible,” said Gaddy. Gaddy’s supervisor, Chief Warrant

Officer Julio Irlanda, Hohenfels property book officer, said he was more than willing to endorse Gaddy’s request to attend the course. “I endorsed it because it is education. Why not?” he said. “We were thrilled because she is the first local national from Hohenfels to go.” Irlanda said the Basic Course certificate is something Gaddy can put on her resume that will help her wherever she goes, whether she remains an Army employee or not. “It will help her later. For example, there is a team chief for each of our three teams. If her team chief left and I were the person choosing who is next, she would be in a good position because she has the training,” said Irlanda. Bridy Godwin, Plans, Analysis and Integration officer for the garrison, said she also encourages her employees to take advantage of CES opportunities. “It is great for career progression,” said Godwin. One of them, Rajan Ignatius, another local national, has just

completed the online training of the basic course and is awaiting dates for his training in Kansas. “I understood many things better (after completing the online course). I learned about leadership and how to handle different situations, though mainly about communication and feedback,” said Ignatius. “Communication is so important because if that breaks down everything falls apart.” The benefits of the training came at no cost to either the student or their immediate employer. Attendance, including travel and living costs, are centrally funded for most Army civilians, meaning the Department of the Army picks up the bill. So impressed was she with the Basic Course, Gaddy said she hopes to attend the Intermediate Course by next summer. Civilians interested in attending a CES course should contact their supervisor and visit www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil/ces for more information.

Team Apache departs for Afghanistan to continue mission of Team Blackfoot

Story and photos by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

While the escalating conflict in Afghanistan gains media attention in the United States, the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment in Hohenfels, Germany quietly sent yet another of its companies to single-handedly patrol thousands of miles in the southern part of the country.

There was no parade through town, no television crews, no fanfare - just a small number of weary-eyed family members - to say goodbye as the Soldiers of Team Apache readied to board their buses in the early hours of Aug. 19.

Spouses, children and friends wrapped themselves in blankets to keep out the early morning chill as they said goodbye to the seventh team from 1-4 to deploy in support of Task Force Zabul and the International Security Assistance Force.

While there, Team Apache will serve under the tactical control of the 280th Maneuver Battalion of the Romanian Army.

Once they arrive, Team Apache's first mission will be to complete Relief in Place operations with Team Blackfoot that has been in the region since February.

Capt. Kyle Wheeler, company commander, said his main goal is to continue the work of Blackfoot.

"We're going to be providing security for the region," said Wheeler.

"We want to provide stability for the government so in the future they can become the sole ones in charge (of their country)," he said.

"The main thing is to go ahead and let the people make a living without threat of anyone taking it from them," said Spc. Douglas McDonald, who, after returning in February from a deployment with Team Cherokee volunteered to return with Team Apache.

"There are a lot of guys who haven't been downrange. They need people with the experience. I'm just doing what I do best. This is what I

love to do," said McDonald, who is not the only one who volunteered for Team Apache.

Made up mostly of Soldiers from Co. A, Team Apache also includes Soldiers from across the battalion as well as Sailors and Airmen who will bring their unique expertise to the mission.

Team Apache began training in April to help the Soldiers transition from their role as opposing forces and to build their ability to work together as a team.

They participated in situational and live-fire training in Grafenwoehr and a deployment training exercise with the 280th maneuver battalion in Romania before completing a

comprehensive mission readiness exercise at Hohenfels in June.

Addressing Team Apache at their deployment ceremony in the post theater Aug. 10, Lt. Col. Rafael Paredes, 1-4 Inf. commander, told the Soldiers that after observing them for the past month, "I have the utmost confidence in you and your leadership."

"I am impressed with your professionalism which will help you accomplish the mission to the highest standards and help you make a lasting impact on the lives of the Afghan people in Zabul province," Paredes said. "Be well, be strong, be professional. Godspeed and for your safe return we pray."

Pvt. Jimmy Barker says a final farewell to his wife Lacey Aug. 19 before departing for Afghanistan with 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment's Team Apache in support of Task Force Zabul.



Capt. Kyle Wheeler, left, commander of Co. A, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, looks on as 1st Sgt. Michael Levesque, center, Co. A first sergeant, calls roll during the early hours of Aug. 19. Minutes later the Soldiers of Team Apache loaded the buses that took them on the first leg of their journey to Zabul Province, Afghanistan.

Airmen, Soldiers share capabilities in training

Story and photo by
TODD OLIVER
7th Army JMRC PAO

Ground forces, whether in Afghanistan or Iraq, can be reasonably certain any aircraft above them is friendly aircraft.

What they can't be certain of is what kind of aircraft is up there, who owns the aircraft, what kind of help the aircraft can offer and, finally, how they can talk to the aircraft about the situation on the ground.

To fill this information void, in steps the Joint Tactical Air Controller, or JTAC. These U.S. Air Force personnel, experts on identifying the capabilities of both foreign and domestic military aircraft, recently teamed up with members of the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center during the multinational Allied Strike exercise to hone their skills, while familiarizing the members of 1-4 Inf. on what they bring to the fight.

Under the direction of the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command, whose footprint is within close-proximity of other U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine bases within Europe, the JMRC regularly conducts training with its joint partners.

Training together helps improve each service's readiness to execute missions throughout the region and across the globe, while building relationships among troops destined to fight together in future security operations.

"It was my first time working with JTAC. It was outstanding," Staff Sgt. Kevin Wilson, a squad leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-4 Inf., said after leading his squad through a simulated Afghanistan-based scenario.

"I gained a lot better idea of what I have available to accomplish my mission. Instead of using just manpower, I have an entirely new

weapons system at my disposal."

Wilson's squad was inserted by helicopter into a field next to a village in JMRC's training area. Once they had all rallied together, they began a patrol that would lead them into the village. Each of the squad's two teams had a JTAC Airmen with them.

"The JTAC's job is to inform the ground commander of what air power is capable of no matter what kind of aircraft, what branch or even what nationality that aircraft is from," said Tech Sgt. Joseph Hren, JTAC instructor and evaluator.

"If the commander sees a target and says, 'make that building go away' we have to see what the aircraft has on it and figure out what weapon we're going to apply and how we're going to apply it. Our ultimate goal is minimal collateral damage while getting the mission done and meeting the ground commander's intent."

Incorporating lessons learned from previous conflicts, the JMRC helps units train to meet hybrid threats that are diverse, dynamic combinations of conventional, irregular and terrorist capabilities.

Where once units might have used massive amounts of ordinance to destroy a target, concerns over civilian casualties is something that the JTACs discuss among themselves and specifically train to address.

"It definitely figures into the training," explained Hren. "We always want to train as we fight, if things are changing downrange as far as how we attack a target or the effects of collateral damage we have to take all of that into consideration."

Sounds of helicopters buzzing the rooftops in the mock village and the louder, deadlier aircraft higher up is eventually accompanied by a chorus of small-arms and not so small-arms fire as Wilson and his squad began their training in earnest.

They must figure out how to use JTACs

to engage an unknown enemy in a complex environment.

"It's an urban fight and it gave them (the Soldiers) a chance to see what JTACs do," said Capt. Todd Poindexter, JMRC observer/controller. "It gave them a better understanding of what their Air Force brethren can do. Answering questions like 'what does a Maverick do verses what does an A-10 do, which one is more accurate?' It's a two-way road and they

learn from each other, which is key."

Joint training venues like this allow units to learn from one another and to establish tactics, techniques, and procedures for future operations.

"I learned that JTAC is the most important thing to have, to have it with you at all times. It gives the pilot a lot better understanding of what the situation is on the ground, which is obviously a good idea," said Wilson.



1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment's Staff Sgt. Kevin Wilson, left, operates a radio while Joint Tactical Air Controller Senior Airman Michael Gibbs, right, provides security during a training event Aug. 4 at the 7th Army Joint Multinational Readiness Center. The Soldiers and Airman were teaming up as part of Allied Strike, an Air Force-led multinational exercise at the Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels training areas.

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/Vilseck Briefs

AFC survey

An Army Family Covenant online survey is being held through Sept. 15 to evaluate the effectiveness of the AFC.

Soldiers, family members and civilians are encouraged to evaluate their satisfaction with all aspects of Covenant-related programs and services.

The survey only takes a few minutes and can be accessed from the garrison web site at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

Command information survey

USAG Grafenwoehr will hold a command information survey through Sept. 2.

Completing this short six-question survey will give leaders valuable insight on how we can improve information delivery to you. Available at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

Customer service assessment

Participate in the 2009 annual Customer Service Assessment through Sept. 18.

Customers who live, work or do business at U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr have an opportunity to rate the importance and performance of garrison services by logging onto www.my-armyvoice.org.

For more, call CIV 09641-83-8881 or e-mail usagggrafenwoehr.cms@eur.army.mil.

Country night at 'The Zone'

Join us for a good old fashion Country Music night tomorrow at the "The Zone" Sports Bar at the Langenbruck Center on Rose Barracks.

Participants must be 18 or older. For more, call DSN 475-8822.

GCSC super sign-up

Community members are invited to attend the GCSC community super sign-up at the GCSC Thrift Shop Bldg 508, Sept 11 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Attend a "one-stop shopping" venue to sign-up for different activities offered throughout USAG Grafenwoehr. Over 20 different organizations will be present.

Operation Rising Star

Win the ultimate recording music experience Sept. 11 and Sept. 18.

Local winners win \$500 cash & advance to the Televised Finals; 2nd place win \$250 in cash; 3rd place win \$100 in cash.

Audience, come vote and win prizes too. Three-hundred dollars will be awarded to the most supportive unit or FRG.

Singers must be Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard or military family members 18 and older. Doors open at 6 p.m., show starts at 7 p.m. Location: Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center, Bldg. 102/103.

For more, call DSN 475-6426.

CFC training

A training session for all CFC unit representatives will be held Sept 16 at 10 a.m. in Grafenwoehr at Bldg.244, Room 219. Training will last approximately 1.5 hours.

For more info contact Christine Nunez at DSN 475-8432, or email Christine.nunez@eur.army.mil.

Estate claims

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Larry E. Candler of LFOA-Europe should contact the following summary court martial officer, Capt. Geerati Choosang at DSN 474-2485, or email geerati.choosang@eur.army.mil.

Karaoke night at "The Zone"

Come Sept. 18 for karaoke night at "The Zone" Sports Bar in Vilseck. Starts 9 p.m. Songs range from adult contemporary to old school R&B, and everything in between. Music by DJ Mark C.

'Chewonit' performs

The local U.S. rock band, 'Chewonit,' will perform at the Vilseck VFW Open House, in Bldg. 133, starting at 8 p.m. The band offers a wide assortment of rock music from the 70's on. Open to all community members. Adults only.

Netzaberg Shoppette opening

The Netzaberg Shoppette will hold its grand opening Sept. 24 at 9 a.m.

The facility will have a four-pump island, a fully functional Snack Ave with drink station and complete Java Coffee program, a selection of DVDs to rent and books and magazines to purchase, a walk-in cooler for cold beverages and a Class Six section.

Free and reduced lunch

All Free and Reduced School Lunch applications, including new applications for this school year and re-applications for the upcoming school year, will be processed through CYS Central Registration offices on Rose Barracks (Vilseck) Building 224, or Grafenwoehr Building 244.

CYS Central Registration Rose Barracks (Vilseck) is open from 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday and the Grafenwoehr Central Registration is open from 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For more, call CIV 09662-83-2760 or email cysinfo@eur.army.mil.

American Legion

If you are interested in joining the American Legion in Grafenwoehr, call CIV 09605-925770, or email georgie.t@t-online.de.

AL-ANON

AL-ANON meets every Thursday at 7 p.m. at Counseling Center (downstairs), Building 206 (near CDS) in Grafenwoehr.

For more, call CIV 0171-983-9151.

Garmisch Briefs

Neuschwanstein Castle

Head to the most popular tourist attraction in Germany, the Neuschwanstein Castle, Sept. 13, leaving at 7:30 a.m., cost \$ 32.00.

In addition to Neuschwanstein, this trip includes and a short stop at the UNESCO designated World Heritage Site of the Wieskirche and the Ettal Monastery. For more, call DSN 440-2638, CIV 08821-750-2638.

Top Chef, Garda See

Join us for the vacation of a lifetime Oct. 9-12, cost \$450 per person.

The best trips are the ones that teach you something new - this trip includes two days of cooking classes in a villa, three nights in a lakeside apartment for two, pool, sauna and breakfasts on the terrace. For more, call DSN 440-2638, CIV 08821-750-2638.

Thanksgiving in Paris

It has become traditional - like the turkey! Call DSN 440-2638, CIV 08821-750-2638 for cost and details.

"Stomp"

Enjoy this very athletic theater piece in Munich at the Circus Krone Sept. 29-Oct. 4, cost €29-59 (children under the ages of 16 half price!) For more, call DSN 440-2638, CIV 08821-750-2638.

"Ben Hur Live"

Watch the classic theatre Oct. 30-31, cost €120 at the Olympic Hall in Munich. Show includes the recreation of the famous chariot race. For more, call DSN 440-2638, CIV 08821-750-2638.

Hohenfels Briefs

Guys Read Book Club

Guys Read book club- for guys ages 11-15. The September meeting is tomorrow from 3-4 pm. The club is currently reading "Airman" by Eoin Colfer. Call DSN 466-1740 for more.

WIC overseas

If you would like to achieve better health through nutrition, WIC Overseas-Hohenfels will be hosting nutrition classes.

The session will be tomorrow from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in Bldg. 10, ACS room 121.

Topics covered will be Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Understanding the New Food Pyramid, and The Nutrition Label-Making It Work for You.

Coat drive

Join the Military Council of Catholic Women as they collect coats to send to the people of Afghanistan. Bring in your used or new coats to the chapels through tomorrow. For more, email gregnata-lie4@aol.com.

Rothenburg

Step back into time with ITR in Rothenburg ob der Tauber.

The bus will depart Hohenfels Sept. 5 from ODR, Bldg. H15, at 10 a.m. and return to Hohenfels around 10:30 p.m.

The cost is \$40 per person and the price includes transportation to and from Rothenburg.

Seating is limited to the first 50 people. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

173rd ABCT Banner Day

The 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team will hold a Banner Day Sept. 13 at Hohenfels Training Area in Germany.

Events scheduled include a Brigade run, a Brigade photo, athletic competitions, an awards ceremony and a BBQ.

The event is open to family members and friends of the Sky Soldiers.

ATV training course

The ATV training course provides certified safety training to ensure the safest ride possible. You must possess a valid class C License. ATV Training Courses will take place from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The cost is \$75 per person.

The next courses are on Sept. 5, Sept. 12, Oct. 3 and Oct. 24. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

ATV safari

ATV Safari will take place Sept. 6 from 8 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$35 and includes fuel for the day and safety gear.

ATV Safari dates are Sept. 6, Sept. 13, Oct. 4, and Oct. 25. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

Arevita Spa

ITR is going to the Arevita Spa in Amberg Sept. 9.

The bus will leave at 8 a.m. from ODR and will return around 2:30 p.m. Each trip is limited to eight guests. The cost is \$110 per person. Make sure to bring Euros and they do accept the VAT form.

Ed. center testing services

The DLAB will be given Sept. 9 at 9 a.m. You must have a DA Form 4187 signed by the commander.

The AFAST will be given Sept. 16 at 9 a.m. You must have a GT of at least 110 and a DA Form 4187.

For more, call DSN 466-4040. Testing services are offered in Bldg. 351.

Hohenfels Holiday Bazaar

The annual Hohenfels Holiday Bazaar, hosted by the Hohenfels Community and Spouses Club and Hohenfels FMWR will be Sept 10-12, giving shoppers first pick of the antiques, wine, cheese, pottery, rugs, furniture and more from vendors throughout Europe. Vendors will be in the Hohenfels Post Gym, Bldg. 88, and the Community Activities Center, Bldg. 40.

The Holiday Bazaar will take place on 10 Sept. from 10 a.m.-6 p.m., on 11 Sept. from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. and on 12 Sept. from 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

For more, visit www.hohenfelsscsc.com or email kristin.bradley@yahoo.com.

Sept. 11 Memorial Service

A Memorial Service is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. Sept. 11 at the Nainhof Chapel to remember the victims of 9/11.

Hallo Hohenfels logo

With the new, three-day Hallo Hohenfels newcomers' orientation beginning this month, ACS staff is looking for a new logo. If you have an idea for a logo, draw it up and submit it to ACS in person or to becky.gengel@eur.army.mil by Sept. 11.

Texas Hold'em, Bunco

MWR patrons are welcome to enjoy themselves in either game Sept. 11.

Texas Hold'em registration fee is \$25, which includes a light buffet.

Bunco registration fee is \$10 which includes a light buffet. Doors will open at the Zone at 5:30 p.m. and the games will begin at 6:30 p.m. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

Durkheim's Wurstmarkt

Join ITR Sept. 12 for one of the largest and most traditional public festivals

in Germany.

The bus will depart Hohenfels from ODR, Bldg. H15, at 7 a.m. and return to Hohenfels around 11 p.m. The cost is \$60 per person. Seating is limited to the first 50 people. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

FAST class

If you need to raise your GT score, consider enrolling in the upcoming FAST class. Instruction will be held at the Education Center Sept. 16-29 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more, call DSN 466-2882.

High School open house

Hohenfels High School will have open house Sept. 16 at 5:30 p.m.

Fall golf tournament

A golf tournament will take place Sept. 18 at the Hiltzhofen Golf Course.

Teams will consist of four players with a 20 Euro green fee and a \$15 entry fee per player. Check in is at 7 a.m. with a shotgun start at 8 a.m. Registration is until Sept. 14.

If interested, email dlmwrhohenfelsports@eur.army.mil or call DSN 466-2868.

Marriage retreat

All active-duty Soldiers and spouses are invited to join the Family Life Center on a Marriage Retreat to the Beautiful Edelweiss Lodge and Resort Sept. 18-20.

Call DSN 466-3473 or email angelique.dilmore@eur.army.mil for more.

Extreme bowling

Bowl Your Brains Out with an Extreme Bowling twist every Saturday from 8-11 p.m. Bowl as many games as you want for just \$10 for adults and \$7 for children ages 12 and under.

Bowl Your Brains Out

Bowl Your Brains Out at Lane 17 every Monday from 5-9 p.m. Bowl as many games as you want for just \$7 for adults and \$5 for children ages 12 and under. Shoe rental included.

Bilingual 1's, 2's

Every Tuesday in September, children ages 1-2 are invited to the library to listen to bilingual English/Spanish stories, rhymes, flannels, and songs.

Registration is not required. Story times are every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. at the Library, Bldg. 49. For more, call DSN 466-1740.

Bilingual preschoolers

Every Tuesday in September, children ages 3-5 are invited to the library to listen to bilingual English/Spanish stories, rhymes, flannels and songs.

Registration is not required. Story times are every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Library, Bldg. 49. For more, call DSN 466 1740.



I WANT YOU TO TAKE THE CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSESSMENT

RATE THE IMPORTANCE and PERFORMANCE of Garrison services.

Survey is open to all eligible patrons from Aug. 24 through Sept. 18

VISIT WWW.MYARMYVOICE.ORG TO PARTICIPATE



WIN THE ULTIMATE RECORDING MUSIC EXPERIENCE!

Local Winners: Win \$500 cash & advance to the Televised Finals

2nd place: Win \$250 cash

3rd place: Win \$100 cash

Audience: come vote and win prizes too! \$300 awarded locally to the most supportive Unit or FRG.

Grand prize experience includes all expense paid trip for two, vocal coach, professional arrangement, sound engineering, and your very own 3 song demo cd. **A once in a lifetime experience.**

Singers must be Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard or military family members 18 and older!

Sign up now!

GM MILITARY DISCOUNT

11 & 18 September 2009
Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center

For more information call DSN 475-6426, Civ 09641-83-6426

Visit www.OpRisingStar.com for participating locations and official rules.

Pentagon CHANNEL

MWR

AFGE

What’s Happening

Ansbach Briefs

Rate Your Army Home

USAG Ansbach community members can participate in the Web-based customer service assessment at www.myarmyvoice.org now through Sept. 18. The survey allows you to personally rate the performance and importance of garrison organizations that serve and support our Soldiers, family members, civilians and retirees. You can also link to the survey at the top of the garrison website at www.ansbach.army.mil.

Newcomer orientation

Katterbach Army Community Service hosts a newcomer orientation - People Encouraging People - Sept. 22 and 23. The event features a driving tour of the community, a visit to a German hospital and the Aquella swimming pool and a tour of Ansbach. Attendees will also be taught basic German phrases and how to use the bus system. The trip is open to the whole family. Participants should bring Euro for the bus and also for lunch. For more, call ACS at DSN 467-2883, CIV 09802-83-2883.

School lunch program

Free and reduced-price school lunch program applications are available now for the next school year. The applications can be picked up at the Army Community Service, all Department of Defense Dependent Schools, or from the school liaison officer in Bldg. 5817 on Katterbach across from the community mail room. Applicants should complete the form, and bring it with a copy of the sponsor’s orders and most recent leave and earnings statement to ACS.

Personnel’s new hours

The Ansbach Military Personnel Division has new operating hours for its offices.

- ID card section - Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with last customer sign in at 3:45 p.m. Wednesdays are for appointments only.
- Installation Access System - Mondays-Fridays from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-4 p.m.
- Passport section - Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Fridays the office is closed from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. for training and open from 1-4 p.m. Wednesdays are for appointments only.
- Reassignment actions - Mondays-Thursdays from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-4 p.m. Fridays the office is closed from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. for training and open 1-4 p.m. Wednesdays are for appointments only.

For more, call DSN 467-2630, CIV 09802-83-2630.

Learn German

Katterbach Army Community Service hosts German classes for beginners and move advanced speakers throughout the year.

German 1 is scheduled for Oct. 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21. German 2 is scheduled for Sept. 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 and 23. All classes take place from noon to 1 p.m. at Katterbach ACS. For more, call DSN 467-2883, CIV 09802-83-2883.

Instructors wanted

Ansbach’s Schools of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration and Skills Unlimited is looking for people willing to share their expertise with community youth is a variety of skills - and earn money in the process. Child, Youth and Schools Services’ SKIES Unlimited program needs instructors in culinary arts, art, hip hop dance, voice and German language. For more, call DSN 468-7303, CIV 0981-183-303.

Now hiring

The Ansbach Spouses and Civilians Club Thrift Store is hiring for various positions. People interested should stop by the store on Katterbach for an application. The Ansbach Thrift Store is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Thursdays from noon to 6 p.m. For more, call CIV 0176-631-07391.

Foster parents needed

The Army Community Service Family Advocacy Program is looking for interested families to become emergency foster care providers. The EPC program provides substitute family care for children over a planned period of time when a child’s parents are unwilling or unable to care for them. If you are interested, call DSN 467-2146, CIV 09802-83-2146.

Extreme Girl Scout Kick Off

Come join us for extreme games Girl Scout style Sept. 12 at the Ansbach Elementary School from 2-6 p.m. All girls from kindergarten to 12th-grade are invited to attend. For more, email gsansbach@yahoo.com.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Sept. 11 service

The Ledward Chapel invites the community to a 9-11 remembrance service Sept. 11 at 10 a.m.

Finney gym construction

The family-friendly workout room at Finney Gym will be closed until Dec. 31 due to ongoing renovations. Come back after the New Year to see the many improvements made to the facility.

Internet policy questionnaire

The Department of Defense wants your input on the internet policies that it has in place. Fill out a short survey at www.ourmilitary.mil/Content.aspx?ID=45015428.

Spring soccer registration

Registration for youth sports soccer, flag football, and cheerleading ends Friday.

For more information, call CIV 09721-96-6822.

Transition, retirement briefing

The Personnel Transition Assistance Center offers the following briefings in building 40 on Conn Barracks for those transitioning or retiring. For more information, or to reserve a seat call CIV 09721-96-8683 / 8693.

- Pre-transition briefing: Sept. 9 from 9 a.m.-noon
- Career Status Bonus/Redux Retirement briefing: Sept. 9 from 1-2 p.m.
- Pre-retirement briefing: Sept. 16 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Newcomers orientation

Are you new to the Schweinfurt community? Sign up for Army Community Service’s five-day Schweinfurt Newcomers Awareness Program from Sept. 14-18. Free childcare is available the entire week. Get acquainted with the military community as well as the German town of Schweinfurt. Call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933 for more.

Community Bible study

Singles and families are invited to attend a small group Bible study beginning Sept. 9. The study is sponsored by Ledward Chapel protestant service and meets for dinner and discussion every Wednesday from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at a home near Schweinfurt. Call CIV 0170-277-8980 for directions.

National video game day

Celebrate national video game day at Ledward Library Sept. 12. Compete in a Rock Band tournament at 3 p.m.

Barbecue, Bible studies

Protestant Women of the Chapel invites the community to a barbecue at Ledward Chapel today from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Women can learn about the fall Bible studies beginning Sept. 9 at Ledward Chapel at 9 a.m. with free watch care available. For more information, email pwoc.schweinfurt@gmail.com.

High adventure weekend

Join Outdoor Recreation in an adventure to Austria Friday through Monday. Experience the excitement of canyoning, whitewater rafting, hiking, and more. Cost is \$299 per person. To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-8080.

Family fun Saturday

Families are invited to come out to Askren Manor for a fun-filled “Splash Bash” day Saturday from noon-8 p.m. Enjoy water fun for kids and adults; Donny Vox band performances at 2, 4, and 6 p.m.; and a family movie shown at dusk.

Basketball sign-ups open

Community basketball registration is now open for male and female players with I.D. cards age 18 and over. Season begins Sept. 16. Team will travel to games on the weekends.

For more, call 09721-96-8234 or email william.comeford@eur.army.mil.

Community update forum

Do you want to know the calendar of events for the community? Do you have questions or concerns to voice about a particular matter? Come to the community update forum in the Schweinfurt Elementary School multi-purpose room Tuesday at 6 p.m.

Middle, high school fun

Middle-schoolers are invited to attend the fall kick-off event Tuesday for Club Beyond on Kessler field from 3-4 p.m. High-schoolers are invited to Bamberg teen center Sept. 10 from 5:30 – 7 p.m. Dinner and rides home are provided. Make new friends and have fun playing games while learning about God. Call CIV 09721-96-8620 for more.

Lunch ‘n Learn

Got children? Come to the Ledward Library Tuesday to learn about Tumblebooks, a program that teaches kids to read in creative ways. Call CIV 09721-96-1740 for details.

Zines for teens

Teenagers are invited to attend the Zines for Teens club at Ledward Library meeting every Thursday at 6 p.m. Club is open to any teens interested in design, writing, photography, or editing. Call CIV 09721-96-1740 for details.

Wilderness first aid course

Sign up for American Red Cross’ 16-hour first aid course Sept. 16-18. Call for details or to sign up at CIV 09721-96-1760.

TSP class held

Do you know everything there is to know about the Thrift Savings Plan? If not, come to Army Community Service’s class Understanding the TSP, Sept. 15 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. This workshop provides information for Soldiers and civilian employees on the Thrift Savings Plan. Call CIV 09721-96-6933 for more.

Bowling tournament

Join the Baker Double tournament at the Kessler Bowling Center Sept. 12 at 1 p.m. Tournament includes three games with the winner determined by the high-

est score. Cost is \$20 per two-person team. Cash prizes will be awarded. Tournament is open to all I.D. card holders 18 and older. For more, call CIV 09721-83391.

Oktoberfest trip

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers invites geographical bachelors and single Soldiers on a trip to Munich for Oktoberfest Sept. 19. Cost is 40 euro per person, and bus departs Finney Fitness Center at 6 a.m. Join the biggest beer fest in the world! Deadline to sign up is Sept. 15. Call CIV 09721-96-8476 for more.

Get tips on birth and babies

Do you have a baby on the way and want to be prepared with what to expect? Come to Army Community Service’s two-part series Birth-n-Babies at Ledward ACS on Sept. 9 and 11 from 9 a.m. to noon. Learn the latest about what is available for labor and delivery, how to handle complications, and what to do the first night home with your new baby. For more, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Love and logic parent

Army Community Service offers classes for those interested in “Becoming a Love and Logic Parent.” Classes are held each Tuesday at School Age services from 9 to 11 a.m. Discover your parenting style and learn tips on how to raise loving, respectful and responsible children. Call CIV 09721-96-6933 for more.


Write a civilian resume

For those who are job searching or updating their resume, attend Army Community Service’s class, Civilian Resume 101, at the computer lab in bldg. 206 on Ledward Barracks Sept. 10 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. This computer workshop will provide information on the three most common types of civilian resumes. Other topics discussed include how to write a cover letter and thank you letter. Call CIV 09721-96-6933 for more.

Smooth move seminar

Leaving the community? Army Community Service wants to help smooth your transition. Attend a seminar at Ledward ACS Sept. 9 from 9 to 11 a.m. to get tips on packing, shipping, moving with pets and more. For more, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

**Wednesday
September 16**
Club Beyond Kick-Off



EAT THE MENU CLUB

Club Beyond

Middle School 3:30-5:00 p.m. (snacks provided)
High School 5:30-7:00 p.m. (dinner provided)

Upcoming Clubs:
Jello Club: Wednesday, September 23
Banana Club: Wednesday, September 30
Baby Club: Wednesday, October 14
Movie Club: Wednesday, October 21

Small Groups:
Guys & Girls small groups will be starting up in September! Dates and times to be announced soon!

Breakfast Clubs: Thursday mornings
Katterbach DFAC - 0700-0800
Contact Club Beyond if you need a ride

Events:
High School Snow Camp in Garmisch | December 19-22
Permission slips available on the website. Space is limited.

 Sean Campbell, Community Director
scampbell@clubbeyond.org
phone: 0161-1497-7561

Fun, Friends & Faith

www.ClubBeyondAnsbach.com

**WORLDWIDE
ARMY FAMILY COVENANT
SURVEY**

Aug 15 - Sep 15



KEEPING THE PROMISE
Help us honor our commitment to Soldiers & Families!
Visit www.armymwr.com/fmwrc/AFC/survey.htm

Regensburg

A small city with a great history



Story and photos by
LOU STAGGER

Special to the Bavarian News

Just over an hour south of Grafenwoehr is the grand old city of Regensburg. With a history spanning nearly 2000 years, you can imagine why there might be a lot to see. Situated at the confluence of the Regen and Danube rivers on the most northerly bend of the Danube, Regensburg started its written history during the time of the Romans. The Romans were able to use the rivers as defensive points but were never able to hold the territory north of the river. They settled in by creating the Castra Regina, fort by the Regen River, and eventually it became known as Regensburg. Christianity has been a great part of the history of Regensburg. St. Boniface set up a Bishopric there in the year 739. In 1135 a stone bridge was started across the Danube. It took 11 years to complete. The Crusader Knights for the second and third Crusades crossed the bridge on their way to the Holy Lands. The bridge, “Steinerne Brücke” opened up the northern European cities to trade with the powerhouse of traders: Venice, Italy. Regensburg gained well from this cross traffic. Goods passed through Regensburg as it developed its reputation for goldsmithing and making fabrics. Regensburg opened up the eastern European borders to Christianity. In 845, more than a dozen Bohemian princes came here to be baptized. Regensburg became the head diocese

for the diocese of Prague. During the years 1275 to 1634 a great Gothic cathedral was built. The towers were added in 1869. The St. Peter Cathedral, or Regensburger Dom, is the greatest example of German Gothic style building in Bavaria. The cathedral is a “must see” while visiting. It’s also the home of the German equivalent to the Vienna Boys Choir: the Sparrows. Many works of art and artifacts are housed within the cathedral and adjoining museums. Within the relatively small area of the Alte Stadt, or old town, you can see at least five different styles of church architecture. The City Museum of Regensburg is a remarkably complete display of early history from the Roman and pre-Roman times to the height of Regensburg’s days as the capital of Bavaria through the time of the Holy Roman Empire. On the south end of town is the former Abby of St. Emmeram. It’s now the Palace of Thurn and Taxis. The Princess still lives here with her two children. The Thurn and Taxis rise to Royal status was remarkable. Tours are offered in the older sections of the Palace which is larger than Buckingham Palace in England. Here you can listen to an English audio guide to learn the secret of their rise from common public service and be surprised at how America wasn’t the first to use this technique. If you want a small city with a huge history, put Regensburg on your list of places to see while you are stationed here. You may just find it charming and delightful.



Left: Very high vaulted ceilings, arched windows and plaster paintings make a dramatic effect at the Carmelite Church in the City Museum.

Far left: St. Ulrich church, built in 1225 is now a museum. The church is one example of the varying styles and eras of architecture within the city.



Above: Leaded glass windows add character to a hallway in the Regensburg City museum.

Left: The twin towers of the St. Peter Cathedral or Regensburger Dom, a “must-visit” while in Regensburg, reach into the clouds. The cathedral is arguably the greatest example of German Gothic architecture in Bavaria. It is also home to the prestigious “Sparrows” boys choir and to countless artifacts. The cathedral was built between 1275 and 1634. The towers were added in 1869.



Medical attention following animal bites essential in rabies prevention

Story and photo by
JENNIFER WALSH
BMEDDAC PAO

Man’s best friend is usually a beloved member of the family and a loyal companion. But would you know what to do if friendly Fido suddenly turned ferocious?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site, dogs bite more than 4.7 million people each year. While most bites are easily treated and do not result in serious injury or death, the Bavaria Medical Department Activity Preventive Medicine team says animal bites should be taken seriously.

“There are two important things you should do after an animal bite,” said Capt. Joseph Woodring, chief of Preventive Medicine. “Wash out the wound with water and soap for at least 15 minutes and then see a health care provider to assess whether you need to receive treatment.”

To determine what type of medical treatment is needed, the health care provider will ask a series of questions such as whether the animal was provoked, acting strangely, foaming at the mouth or dirty. Another sign to look for is if the animal is wearing a collar, which could indicate it is someone’s pet.

If the animal is someone’s pet, there is a

better chance of determining if the animal was carrying rabies.

“The pet will likely be observed for about 10 days by a veterinarian to see if the animal’s behavior is indicative of rabies,” Woodring said. “Whereas if the animal is wild, the only way to tell if it has rabies is to euthanize it and examine the brain for lesions consistent with rabies.”

After assessing the situation surrounding an animal bite, the health care provider will determine if treatment is needed. This could include further cleaning and treating of the wound as well as medical therapy to prevent rabies.

“In the past, people may have heard of shots being given in the abdomen if you were bitten by an animal,” Woodring said. “However, this is no longer the case.”

Instead, if the health care provider thinks there is a risk of contracting rabies, they may prescribe a five-shot series of the rabies vaccine, which is administered during the course of a month.

Additionally, patients would be treated with rabies immune globulin as soon as possible after exposure to neutralize the virus.

Although the incubation period for rabies is typically three to eight weeks, rabies can become active anywhere from six days to as long as seven years after a bite, according to Woodring.

“The lengthy time variable is one very good



In the event that man’s best friend turns ferocious and bites, officials urge thoroughly washing the wound with soap and water for 15 minutes and scheduling an appointment with a medical provider.

Courtesy photo

reason to have a health care provider assess your bite regardless of how long it’s been since you were bitten,” Woodring said. “Say you were bitten while you were down range and you come home two months later. Go ahead and schedule an appointment with your health care provider so they can assess if you need to be treated against rabies.”

If left untreated, rabies almost always becomes a fatal disease. However, if spotted early enough, rabies can be treated.

“Don’t keep waiting to see how you feel in a couple of days,” Woodring said. “We have an effective treatment plan that prevents rabies. Do the right thing. Call your health care provider and take charge of your health.”

Health benefits awareness month stresses prevention, taking care of both mind, body

TRICARE Press Release

This is the first part of a two part series dealing with TRICARE benefits.

The month of September is the TRICARE Health Benefits Awareness Month. It is important for you and your family to have the best health possible.

During the month, TRICARE will focus on four important facets of good health:

- a. Physical health - week 1
- b. Mental health - week 2
- c. Dental health - week 3
- d. Travel Health - week 4

Physical health

TRICARE covers most inpatient and outpatient care that is medically necessary and considered proven.

Equally important to primary care is preventive health care which can help you live a healthier, longer life.

As a TRICARE beneficiary you are eligible for a range of clinical preventive services, including examinations, immunizations and periodic screenings based on your age, health history and family history.

Coverage varies for Prime and Standard beneficiaries – so it is best to double check your specific benefit.

Remember, prevention is the best way to take care of yourself and your family.

Comprehensive health promotion and disease preventive examinations: One comprehensive disease preventive clinical evaluation should be accomplished for ages 24 months and older during the following age intervals: 2-4; 5-11; 12-17; 18-39; 40-64.

Targeted health promotion and disease prevention examinations: The following screening examinations may be performed during either the above periodic comprehensive health promotion examination or as part of other patient encounters.

The intent is to maximize preventive care.

Cancer Screenings: Did you know that not all insurances pay for various preventive screenings?

TRICARE leads the way in providing a robust preventive health screening opportunity for both TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Standard.

- Female screenings include breast cancer screenings with physical

Make your preventive health appointments online. Find your local health clinic at the Europe Regional Medical Command Web site, <http://ermc.amedd.army.mil/mtf>, and click on the “Online Appointment” link. Online appointments are available around the clock, long after the appointments desk at clinics have closed.



exam and mammogram every 12 months for women 39 years and older, younger if you have a family history of breast cancer.

Papanicolaou (Pap) annually starting at age 18 years – after three consecutive normal exams, may be done every three years.

- Male screenings include testicular exam annually for males starting at age 13 to age 39 with history of cryptorchidism, orchiopexy or testicular atrophy.

Prostate cancer examination is offered annually for all men beginning at age 50 (earlier if family history of prostate cancer). The screenings include a physical exam and a Prostate-Specific Antigen.

- Colorectal Cancer exams for both men and women start at age 40 with physical exam and occult blood tests every year. Sigmoidoscopy exams should be done every three to five years beginning at age 50 and colonoscopy every 10 years beginning at age 50.

Cardiovascular Screenings: Everyone should get cholesterol screenings– lipid panel- at least every five years beginning at age 18.

Blood pressure checks should be done at least every two years.

Vision screening: Active duty family prime enrolled beneficiaries, three years old and older, are authorized one comprehensive eye exam by a specialist every year.

Infants are screened by their primary care provider at birth and at six months of age.

Children who are standard beneficiaries between the ages of three and six years are authorized two comprehensive eye exams by a specialist.

Adult standard beneficiaries are not covered for visual screenings.

Immunizations: Age appropriate

vaccines (found at www.cdc.gov/vaccines) to include newly recommended vaccines:

- Shingles (Herpes Zoster) - beneficiaries age 60-65
- Human papillomavirus (HPV) - girls ages 11-12; or catch up for girls 13-26 years

This is not an all inclusive list of the Clinical Preventive Services offered by TRICARE so make sure you check with your primary care provider to assure you are up to date on the appropriate screenings for yourself and your family.

Mental health

In addition to physical well-being, it is important to also focus on our mental well-being.

There is much in the news lately on suicide prevention, Traumatic Brain Injury, Mild Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, all of which has a special impact on our military families.

TBI and MTBI occur when the head is struck or shaken violently such as with a fall or an explosion or blast. PTSD occurs when someone experiences a life-threatening or horrific situation.

One may not have experienced any specific change in life circumstance, but may still experience depression, anxiety, phobias or the like.

Sadness, loneliness, feelings of being overwhelmed or out-of-control, sleeping too much or too little, feeling angry or irritable or just numb or any change in personality are just a few of the symptoms that should signal you to seek help no matter what may have led up to these feelings.

Just like a high fever and trouble breathing may be symptoms that make you seek care from a doctor, any behavioral health symptoms, which may be more subtle, are equally

important signals that “it is now time to ask for help.”

Mental well-being is just as important as physical well-being.

Many programs are being developed within the military health system for psychological health issues that include prevention, protection, diagnosis, treatment and recovery.

It is important for us to recognize and treat those “mental injuries” that are keeping you and your family from experiencing the best mental or psychological health possible.

Tools to help

There are many resources at your fingertips to help and just like clinical preventive health measures, seeking professional help at the first signs of mental distress is very important.

- Military OneSource offers counseling and other assistance 24/7 through toll-free numbers and resources found at www.militaryonesource.com.
- Afterdeployment.com at www.afterdeployment.org offers confidential education on many issues such as dealing with stress, conflict at work, reconnecting with family and friends, anger, substance abuse and kids and deployment.
- An anonymous behavioral health self-assessment can be found at www.militarymentalhealth.org/chooselang.asp.

TRICARE Coverage?

- Non-active duty TRICARE Prime beneficiaries may go to eight outpatient behavioral health care visits without a referral.
- Outpatient psychotherapy - limited to length of appointment and frequency
- Inpatient admissions
 - Patients 19 years and older are limited to 30 days in a fiscal year (or admission)
 - Patients 18 years and younger are limited to 45 days in a fiscal year (or admission)
 - Residential Treatment for patients 18 years and younger may be up to 150 days (available only in the U.S.)
 - Substance Abuse Programs – up to 21 days with an additional seven days for detoxification if needed. Lifetime benefit limited to three inpatient treatment programs.

Pick up the Sept. 16 issue of the Bavarian News for information regarding TRICARE benefits and mental and dental health.

Healthcare Benefits Awareness Month

Check out the events your local health clinic is hosting during September 2009!

Bamberg

15: Health fair, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m., commissary

21: Diabetic screenings, health clinic, by appointment

23: Cervical cancer screenings, health clinic, by appointment

Grafenwoehr

9: Blood pressure checks, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., library

10: Shoe selection clinic, 11 a.m.- 2 p.m., health clinic

11: Health fair, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., health clinic

Hohenfels

10-12: Health info, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., community bazaar

15: Car seat safety checks, 10 a.m.-2 p.m, ACS

16: Open house, 4-8 p.m., high school

17: Open house, 4-8 p.m., elementary school

25: Health fair, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., post gym

Illesheim

11: Health fair, noon to 4 p.m., PX

18: Suicide prevention fair, 10 a.m.-3 p.m, Cobblestone Path

25: Germs education, noon to 1 p.m., Illesheim Elementary School

25: Sexual health education, 5-6 p.m., CYSS Teen Center

Katterbach

18: Health fair, 8 a.m. to noon, fitness facility

25: Car seat safety inspection, 1-5 p.m., CYS

29: Truth about energy drinks, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., dining facility

Schweinfurt

16: Health fair, 10 a.m.-2 p.m, health clinic

23: Preventive medicine and nutrition, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., PX

30: TRICARE, 10 a.m.-2 p.m, PX

Vilseck

17: Health fair, 10 a.m.-2 p.m, shopping center

Soldiers aid nomadic Bedouin camps near Karbala with shoes, clothes, toys

Story and photo by
Pfc. BETHANY L. LITTLE
172nd Infantry Brigade

Soldiers of 1st Platoon, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery, passed out 20 boxes filled with toys, clothes, shoes, coloring books and crayons to a Bedouin camp just outside of Karbala, Aug. 22.

Bedouin people are nomadic shepherds that choose to live in the desert and are able to sustain themselves by bartering their livestock and the products they produce.

There are three Bedouin camps in the area surrounding Karbala that constantly change locations in search of the best conditions for their livestock.

"We only visited one of the camps today, because we knew the exact location," said Staff Sgt. Joseph W. Rippey, squad leader, 1st platoon, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment. "This is our second time here, last time there were approximately 12 tents, but now there are only three tents and one permanent dwelling."

The clothing, shoes and toys were a combined

donation from the 172nd Infantry Brigade Public Affairs Office, Tactical Psychological Operations Detachment 303-1, Thompson Toyota car dealership and Sherah Oberman from Doylestown, Pa.

The Bedouin children cheered and shrieked with excitement as the Soldiers passed out the donated clothing, shoes and toys.

"We are very grateful," said Ali Shallal, a young male camp resident. "These are all things that everyone here can use, especially the clothes and shoes for the smaller children."

Soldiers of the 33rd Iraqi Army Brigade helped to lend a hand passing out the items collected for the Bedouins.

"The first time I came out here, it opened my point of view toward people who choose to live like they do," said Rippey, a native of Baghdad, Ariz. "They survive off of what livestock they have and they don't ask for much."

Bedouin camps are spread throughout the Middle East. The Bedouin's main mode of travel is by camel or on foot and they have few possessions to make traveling easier.

"We have everything we need here," said Shallal. "But we appreciate and are thankful for everything that we're given."

We are very grateful. These are all things that everyone here can use, especially the clothes and shoes for the smaller children.

Ali Shallal

A young camp resident



Staff Sgt. Joseph W. Rippey, squad leader, 1st Platoon, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment sorts through shoes to give to Bedouin children, August 22. The clothing, shoes and toys were a combined donation from the 172nd Infantry Brigade Public Affairs Office, Tactical Psychological Operations Detachment 303-1, Thompson Toyota car dealership and Sherah Oberman from Doylestown, Pa.

Civil affairs in Iraq continues with new company

Story and photo by
Capt. STEPHEN C. SHORT
172nd Infantry Brigade

The Soldiers of B Company, 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion transferred authority to the 1411th Civil Affairs Company Aug. 24 after a successful 10-month deployment to Operation

Iraqi Freedom.

The two companies held formations as they stood before an attentive crowd of Soldiers from the 172nd Infantry Brigade, Blackhaws, which is the current brigade that B Company has worked with during their last months in Iraq.

The commander of B Company, Maj. Rich-

ard E. Brown, cased the guidon of his company to symbolize the transfer of authority to the 1411th CA Company.

Immediately following the casing of the guidon of B Company came the uncasing of the guidon of the 1411th, a provisional civil affairs company from Edison, New Jersey.

Brown addressed the formation as the outgoing commander, specifically on the way that his unit adapted to new environments and their ability to work outside of doctrine when it did not apply.

"In the last year we have done a lot of non-doctrinal stuff," said Brown. "Everything 'we' did, we resourced it, we trained it and we went out and we did that."

"I can't begin to tell you how proud I am of each and every one of you," added Brown, a resident of Cortland, New York.

Bravo Company has deployed three times in the Global War on Terror. The experienced civil affairs company has worked in Afghanistan and now twice in Iraq. The 1411th is on their first deployment as a civil affairs company, because they are originally a chemical company.

"Bravo, 403rd, we are taking over and we are ready to fill those big shoes," said Capt. Kristen L. Brockman, commander, 1411th Civil Affairs Co, from Jackson, New Jersey.

"We know that you guys have done an outstanding job."

After receiving notification of their mission in Oct. 2008, the 1411th began training to transform from a chemical unit to a civil affairs company. Once their training completed in July of 2008,

the 1411th deployed to in Aug. 2009 under Task Force Blackhawk in Babel Province, Iraq.

Civil Affairs units help military commanders by working with civil authorities and civilian populations in the commander's area of operations to lessen the impact of military operations on them during peace, contingency operations and declared war.

With their expertise in civil matters, they are the principle unit in assisting a commander in the conduct of civil-military operations. CA units act as a liaison between the civilian population and the military presence, both informing the local commander of the status of the civilian populace as well as providing assistance to locals by either coordinating military operations with non-governmental organizations or distributing directly aid and supplies.

The CA units are usually composed of civilian experts such as doctors, lawyers, engineers, police, firefighters, bankers, computer programmers, farmers, and others. This collection of expertise helps the commander assess need for critical infrastructure projects such as roads, clinics, schools, power plants and water treatment facilities.

Once a project has been approved, a contract is created and work is staffed by local contractors who win the bid to complete the work. CA teams ensure the work performed is to standard by periodically checking up on the status of the project.

Civil affairs are one of the key mission units that will help foster a return to normalcy for the Iraqi people.



Maj. Richard E. Brown, commander, B Company, 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion, right, cases the guidon of his company to symbolize the transfer of authority to the 1411th CA Company. Bravo Company has deployed three times in the Global War on Terror to Afghanistan and twice in Iraq.

Multi-talented musician boosts morale of fellow Soldiers

Story and photo by
Pfc. BETHANY L. LITTLE
172nd Infantry Brigade

Music fills the air of the small patrol base as Soldiers gather around a multi-talented musician.

Lost within the song, a fellow Soldier, Pfc. Andrew S. Wells, field data tactical system specialist, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, strums on his guitar for the gathered Soldiers.

Music has always been a part of Wells' life.

The second oldest in a family of six brothers and one sister, Wells first immersed himself in the world of music with the drums.

"I started with the drums and then each year in school I started to learn a new instrument from scratch," said Wells, a native of Dimwilde, Va.

Wells also learned how to play the trombone, trumpet, guitar and bass guitar. The driving influence in his

life to play is his stepfather.

"He pushed me into playing the drums when I was younger," said Wells. "But the more I played, the more I wanted to play other instruments."

Although Wells doesn't play with his family as much anymore, he continues to play his guitar, even while deployed to Iraq.

"I love to play and being in Iraq is not going to stop me from playing," said Wells.

The desert heat and unique environmental conditions in Iraq have the potential to create problems for some components of musical instruments.

"I have to be careful, especially with the heat. The neck of the guitar could warp or bend and my strings can rust and break," he added.

Wells continues to strum and tune his guitar as the melody floats from his fingertips.

"He's always playing and singing to his girlfriend," said Pfc. Robert M. Hable, radio and telephone operator, 1st Platoon, Bravo Battery, 1st Bn., 77th Field Artillery Regiment, as Wells' cheeks flush with color.

Smiling, Wells begins to sing "My Angel," a song he wrote for his girlfriend, Michelle.

"I've written at least five or six songs for her. She loves to hear me play and sing. Every time I come home she begs me to play for her," said Wells thoughtfully.

Wells finishes playing "My Angel" and starts to play another song he wrote called "Makes Me Stronger" as more Soldiers gather around to listen.

Residents here enjoy having their own entertainer. In addition to his music, he brings a little bit of morale to the Soldiers.

"I don't mind him playing, in fact there have been a lot of times when I have come back from work in a very bad mood and he was in here just playing on his guitar," said

Hable, a native of Wichita Falls, Texas.

"Listening to him play calms me down and really brightens my spirit," he continued.

"What he doesn't tell you is that

I sing him to sleep every night," said Wells jokingly.

While Wells doesn't really sing people to sleep at night, he does what he can to lighten the mood through his love of music.



Pfc. Andrew Wells plays his guitar while Soldiers take a break to listen. Wells also plays bass guitar, trombone, trumpet, drums, sings and writes his own songs.

Katterbach Thrift Store undergoes facelift, boosts shopping experience

Story and photos by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News

The Ansbach Spouses and Civilians Club spruced up the Katterbach Thrift Store to provide more perks and put some unity in the community.

Some hard work by club members, along with help and resources from the community, made the change a welcome reality, said ASCC president Kimberly Emerson.

“We needed to improve it so people would want to shop here more,” she said. “If we want to make more money for the thrift store, we have to put back into it. Improvement is always a good thing and this fits right in line with what the garrison is doing.”

She said that the old look had a blue patriotic theme, but it was a bit antiquated and in need of a facelift.

“We wanted fresh,” said Emerson. “The spouses club owns the store - we want our customers to feel a sense of fun and excitement. We want bright and cheery and welcome for the customers to feel good.”

She said in addition to the overall interior painting, they painted the club’s logo on a wall to the right of the entrance and added a slogan.

“This year we chose ‘Helping put Unity in Community’ - we had it first, I checked,” said Emerson. “We should all be putting unity in community - we are all one community and we all want to help each other.”

Some of the other major changes in the store included moving the furniture to the middle section of the store; moving the clothes to the back; adding a bigger baby section; adding a book store; putting in new glass-tops for the showcases; installing new carpeting; and building shelves for clothes to help the staff sort donations and clean out clutter.

“It helps us make better use of our space,” said Emerson. “It has improved so much from where it was five years ago, but we are still improving.”

The store is also getting a scanning system and a debit card machine to help raise profits and provide better customer service, Emerson said.

The improvements will also create new jobs, she said.

“The more money we make, the more we can spend on salaries and jobs will open up,” she said.

“We are hiring now for three more positions. As we increase profits, we can hire another one or two people.”

The store now offers perks for volunteers, like discounts and childcare reimbursement, and the club plans to offer something for customers, too.

“In the winter we’ll offer cocoa and coffee and see if we can get some snacks in there, too - it is a way to get people connected,” she said. “It makes our community look better and shows we have community pride - we want to make a difference, leaving a better place for the people who are coming later.”

Emerson said unity in the community was readily apparent during the renovation process.

“I want people at Ansbach to know how supportive the rest of the community has been to help us remodel - the post exchange with giveaways, self help with supplies and the directorate of public works with shelving,” she said. “We really spent probably \$50 on painting, but the rest came mostly from self help and their support.”

The newly-renovated store hosted a grand re-opening Aug. 27 with a back-to-school sale and recieved rave reviews.

The store re-opened to raving reviews on Aug. 27.

“I love it! I found my fan and some PT running shoes for 25 cents - can’t beat that. I’ll come back, most definitely,” said Spc. Abdoulaye Ndiaye of Echo Company 3-158 Aviation.

To regular thrifty shoppers, the changes are welcome. “It is a nice change - the colors are bright, prices are good and I like the sales, like the 10 and 25 cent items,” said Hazel Edwards, special education teacher at the Katterbach Middle/High School, noting that there is a larger variety of items in the store versus other local stores. “I do not shop hardly any place else,” she added.

“They changed it around quite a bit - it is a lot more organized, a lot clearer and more accessible. It is a great place to shop and who does not like air conditioning in Germany?” said Jennifer Smith, family readiness support assistant for 2-159 Aviation.

And Emerson was thrilled with the turn out.

“It is packed,” she said. “We had to keep people out 15 minutes before opening - sales are good today and most customers are walking around with a bag.”



Thrifty customers and children shop at the newly renovated Katterbach Thrift Store. The Ansbach Spouses and Civilians Club spruced up the store with a fresh coat of paint and painted the club’s logo on a wall to the right of the entrance, added a slogan and hosted a grand re-opening Aug. 27 with a back-to-school sale.



Customers check-out at the newly renovated Katterbach Thrift Store.

The Ansbach Spouses and Civilians Club plans to further improve the shopping experience at the store with a new scanning and debit card system.

For more on the thrift store, call DSN 467-2534 or CIV 09802-83-2534.

Civilian misconduct office recommends caution

by **RONALD H. TOLAND JR.**
Bavarian News

Living in Germany with U.S. government support is a privilege for civilians within the military community - a privilege that comes with responsibilities and expectations.

It is a good idea for people to know what is expected of them and what can happen to them when they fail to live up to those responsibilities, said Donna Bond, the garrison civilian

misconduct actions specialist.

While in Germany, members of the military community are governed by special international agreements, including the Status of Forces Agreement, governing the relationship between Germany and the U.S. military on matters of criminal jurisdiction as well as other legal and civil matters.

U.S. civilian employees and U.S. family members are subject to the German jurisdiction and laws in criminal and civil actions, regardless

of nationality.

On top of that, when civilians break host nation laws or violate U.S. regulations, the military can revoke or suspend logistical support - you abuse it, you lose it, said Bond.

“Every situation is different, but the end result is usually from a series of serious offenses,” she said. “Sanctions or consequences are recommended to the commander for the infraction whether it is a letter, loss of shopping privileges for six months, or worse - like being barred from any military installation in Europe or sent back to the U.S.”

The regulation that governs the authority to take administrative action when civilian misconduct occurs is Army Europe Regulation 27-9. It delegates authority to the Civilian Misconduct Action Authority, the garrison commander, who is responsible for upholding the morale, welfare, safety, wellbeing and order within the geographical area.

“The commander is like the mayor of a city,” said Bond.

She added that the regulation gives the commander the authority to determine the actions that are taken in reaction to offenses committed by civilians associated with the military.

“It is where the rubber meets the road,” said Bond, noting it does not apply to Soldiers. “It is only for civilians because the Soldiers fall under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

“The regulation is used as a guide, like a civilian personnel management employee relations table of penalties:

progressive and sequential discipline for consequences,” said Bond. “We have to have some type of government control and it’s basically case-by-case, but based on precedence.”

Within a calendar year, Bon usually sees about 100 cases.

She explained that the host nation has criminal jurisdiction over civilians during peacetime and civilians associated with the U.S. Army in Germany fall under the jurisdiction of the German authorities, even if they live in U.S. Army government housing areas.

“There have been cases recently in government housing areas, especially with civilian spouses, and the German law applies because we are on their land,” she said.

But how does one know if they are considered a civilian? The definition of civilian is defined as Family members of active duty Soldiers along with retirees and their family members; non-appropriated and appropriated fund employees, their family members and members of households; family members of U.S. military members; members of households of U.S. military personnel; Department of Defense Dependent Schools and their family members; employees of contractors and their family members; government consular and diplomatic personnel and their family members; and military, civilian and other persons who sponsor family members for logistical support.

Some of the most common offenses Bond sees include: driving and traffic offenses like drunken driving and speeding; larceny to include shoplifting, fraud and embezzlement,

theft and receiving stolen property; violation of ration regulations, i.e., selling rationed merchandise or black-market operations; violation of postal regulations; assault consummated by battery to include aggravated assault, spouse abuse, assault and battery on a child under 16, child abuse or neglect; drug offenses to include wrongful possession or use of a controlled substance, smuggling a controlled substance, wrongful distribution of a controlled substance; communicating a threat; and cruelty to animals or animal neglect.

She also listed some of the administrative actions that are available to the commander from the moderate to the extreme: counseling; a letter of warning; performing community service; adverse actions; suspension or revocation of logistical support privileges (exchange facilities, commissary, Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities, U.S. Army Club privileges, check cashing privileges, government housing, ration privileges, Class Six privileges, driving privileges); barred from entry onto installations (commanders may bar offenders from areas and facilities under their responsibility and USAREUR-wide); and the early return of family members will be considered when other administrative measures are not expected to be effective.

However, these are not all-inclusive lists, Bond said.

“Try to be aware of the rules - know how the government expects you to behave,” she said.

To find out more, call Bond at DSN 468-7760 or CIV 0981-183-760.

Top 5 tips from the civilain misconduct office:

1. Shoplifting will result in the suspension of AAFES privileges for six - 12 months.
2. Driving Privileges will be suspended or revoked for cases involving intoxication or drugs.
3. Government Housing may be terminated when a sponsor or family member is involved in illegal use of a housing facility. In addition, vandalizing or maliciously abusing Government, school, or personal property will result in the imposition of administrative actions.
4. Actions imposed for the possession, use, and distribution of drugs can include a bar to entry and early return to CONUS.
5. All drivers of USAREUR-plated cars must possess a USAREUR driver’s license. This includes local national families who have German driver’s liscenses.

Focus groups begin evaluating Army Family Covenant delivery in Europe

Story and photo by
MARK HEETER
Schweinfurt CI Chief

A four-person team from U.S. Army Europe, the Installation Management Command-Europe, and the Europe Regional Medical Command

conducted focus groups to assess the success of the Army Family Covenant in Schweinfurt July 30 and 31.

"What we're trying to do is make sure we're not just doing the assessment where we get information, but we give information to these people in the focus group sessions, so

they become more aware of the Army Family Covenant and what it is," said Berry Patrick, IMCOM-Europe project officer for the AFC.

While many customers recognize free and reduced-fee child care as AFC benefits, some do not see the covenant in other projects, such as fitness center upgrades, improvements to other facilities and what Berry calls "common marketplaces" - streets, shopping areas and other spaces where members of the Army Family gather.

"A lot of people are familiar with the program and the improvements that are taking place, but they didn't actually understand that it's linked to the covenant itself," said Leslie Mehall, special assistant to Gen. Carter Ham, USAREUR commanding general, who ordered the review of the covenant as it nears the end of its second year.

By mid-August, the team will have facilitated four focus groups - employees, single Soldiers, company-grade leaders and Soldiers and family members - in each of nine

garrisons across Europe.

While explaining the AFC to the groups, the team is primarily looking to see how the program is being delivered around Europe.

"(Ham) wanted to know, do we focus on one community too much or not enough on another. Or do we give a balanced approach across Europe that everybody got equal emphasis on the covenant," Patrick said.

"Lastly, he wants to know, what did we get right, what did we get wrong, how we can do it better, what recommendations would he need to take back to DA (the Department of the Army) at the two-year mark," he said.

The assessment will not end with the focus groups, according to Mehall and Patrick but will be immediately followed by a month long web-based survey.

All members of the Army family in Europe are encouraged to log on to www.armymwr.com/fmwr/AFC/survey.htm and take the survey, which will be available through Sept. 15.

A lot of people are familiar with the program and the improvements that are taking place, but they didn't actually understand that it's linked to the covenant itself.

Leslie Mehall

Special Assistant to USAREUR Commanding General



Construction workers build what will become an exercise room at the Finney Fitness Center on Conn Barracks. The project is a facility improvement that grew directly out of Army Family Covenant, currently under review at garrisons throughout Europe.

Army Family Action Plan improves health clinic referral process, brings alternatives to patients

by **SANDRA WILSON**
Bavarian News

If something is broken, Army Family Action Plan is out there to fix it. The three-day AFAP conference was held back in February, and since then, positive change has been on the horizon in many different Schweinfurt offices and agencies.

"It's just such a great program. It helps in several different ways, not only bringing issues up front to the forward so we can fix them, but also, if it is an issue, we can explain well this is what we're doing to fix it already," said Katy McClelland, AFAP program manager at Schweinfurt's Army Community Service.

One particular issue about the health clinic's TRICARE referral process was brought up more than once at the conference through submissions from the community.

Patients that were seen by a health clinic provider and then

(AFAP) is just such a great program. It helps in several different ways, not only bringing issues up front to the forward so we can fix them, but also ... we can explain ... what we're doing to fix it already.'

Katy McClelland, AFAP Program Manager

given a referral to an outside doctor described the process of getting that appointment as "complicated and time-consuming," as one community member reported in an issue paper that was submitted early this year.

"After that issue was brought up to our commander's attention, we created a different way that a person can get a referral," said Milagros Borrero-Ruiz, TRICARE nurse case manager. "Before it was only by appointment, they had to wait - now we have two alternatives."

Having to make three appointments - one with the health clinic, then returning for another appointment

with the referral office, and lastly the referral office setting up an appointment with the German doctor - was causing delays that could "result in complicating existing health issues" said one issue submitter.

By initiating the walk-in sign-up sheet, patients are now able to virtually eliminate the middle step by walking into the TRICARE referral office after their appointment with the provider.

"We have two books: one for the same-day appointments and that is a walk-in ... the other is they have a choice of making an appointment for later on. So that has allowed that

the process goes a lot smoother," Borrero-Ruiz said.

Eliminating part of the waiting time for referrals was made possible by the cross-training of several staff members.

The patient liaisons have now been trained to assume the responsibilities of a health care finder by being able to process the paperwork and make appointments at the doctors' offices, according to Borrero-Ruiz.

"We're a lot more flexible. ... I always try really hard to get them in really as soon as possible," said Nicole Peabody, health care finder and technician. "I always see that we

fulfill the needs of the patient."

Even in the midst of a staffing shortage at the clinic, the new adaptations to the referral process can declare another successful moment of positive change through AFAP in the community of Schweinfurt.

"(AFAP) gives us feedback," said Lt. Col. Patrick Denman, health clinic commander, emphasizing the need for people to use the forum to express concerns. "If you come into the clinic or if you go to Leopoldina or St. Joseph's and you have an issue ... you need to let us know so that we can resolve it so that others don't have the same dilemma."

Services are available in the TRICARE office Monday through Friday, but the office closes every Wednesday and Friday afternoon due to German doctor offices being closed.

The entire health clinic is closed every Friday afternoon for mandatory training.

HELP WANTED

How about getting paid to stay in shape?

The U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt sports and fitness program officials are looking for certified fitness instructors to boost their programs.

For information, call CIV 09721-96-8234.



Crocodiles dock at chapel for VBS

Chaplain (Maj.) Kevin Forrester, dressed as the Bible's Old Testament pharaoh, declares to the kids that he will not let God's people go from captivity. Vacation Bible School docked at Ledward Chapel this week with the kids ages 4 through 10 learning how to fear not because "God is powerful". Nearly 115 kids attended each day with more than 65 volunteers from 11 years old to adult helping to make the chapel event a success.

Photo by Sandra Wilson

Acclaimed author entertains community members with workshop, 'conversations'

Story and photo by
EMILY ATHENS
Bavarian News

The Schweinfurt community enjoyed an evening of the arts Aug. 19 outside of the Conn Community Club where participants sipped wine, nibbled hors d'oeuvres and mingled.

Critically-acclaimed novelist and travel writer, Gary Shteyngart, author of award winning books, "The Russian Debutante's Handbook" and "Absurdistan," was the guest of honor, humoring the audience with story readings, book signings and a question and answer session.

"I like to have a program away from the library and have the people from the community involved. It's beneficial because we are in a deployment situation, so we have to make it special for family members here," said Christine Willis, librarian at the Ledward Library.

The evening kicked off with a poetry jam session and presentation by the summer hire teens, followed by a question and answer portion where attendees could enjoy getting to know Shteyngart, as he answered personal questions and offered his expertise on

the subject of writing.

"I really like these workshops. I talk about what writing means to me, how I became a writer, take questions, and do a brief reading. Writing is my dream job. ... It's a calling in some ways. And having an experience like this makes it even better and more worthwhile," Shteyngart said.

Shteyngart, who is also a contributing editor at Travel and Leisure magazine and has fiction and essays featured in such publications as The New Yorker, Granta, GQ, Esquire, and the New York Times, read two personal essays to the crowd once published in The New Yorker. He concluded the book reading portion with two blurbs from "The Russian Debutante's Handbook."

According to Shteyngart, the atmosphere of workshops like this are relaxed and takes participants away from a typical academic setting, adding that "there's nothing at stake here."

Shteyngart's visit concluded his tour of eight garrisons within Europe as part of the Army-Europe "Conversations" literary discussions, which has brought in authors like Daniel Wallace and Andrew Carroll. According to the



Gary Shteyngart, right, notable author of novels and travel pieces, reads to community members during a writer's workshop held Aug. 19 on Conn Barracks. The workshop, consisting of a poetry jam, a question and answer session, book readings and signings, was part of the "Conversations" series in USAREUR libraries.

Army Europe Libraries Web site, these workshops are meant to provide inspiration for anyone interested in creative writing, or just reading in general, while giving Soldiers and family members the opportunity to

meet notable authors.

"Reading takes people away from the day in and day out realities, which is so sad at times. Reading is your fantasy, your imagination, and that's what's important," Willis said, quoting

Shteyngart who said, "If you don't read, you don't think."

For more information on the "Conversations" series, visit www.library.eur.army.mil/events/conversations/index.htm.

Lunch Bunch serves up culture, camaraderie

by **EMILY ATHENS**
Bavarian News

Living in a foreign country can prove to be a challenging undertaking, especially when venturing off post to the surrounding areas.

Army Community Service offers a lunch bunch program where Soldiers and spouses can enjoy an outing at a budget-friendly and

family-oriented restaurant with the assistance of an ACS local national staff member. Open to all I.D. card holders, it is a monthly opportunity to mingle with other Schweinfurt community members while learning valuable information about dining.

"Every month we try to find different restaurants. It's important they feel more comfortable just going to a German restaurant,"

Christina Carmona said, ACS lunch bunch coordinator.

Lunch bunch meets the last Thursday of every month with the goal of helping community members decipher the menu, order, and properly tip. It is also important they understand the general customs of German restaurants, Carmona added.

"Germany has different traditions, so lunch bunch is good for an icebreaker ... for families to get more comfortable in just going out. It takes away the fear of just walking into a new place," she said, explaining that she hopes to motivate people to venture off post more and explore the German culture.

Carmona encourages everybody to bring their children, especially during the warm weather.

"In the summer months, my focus will be to take them to pretty Biergartens and places with playgrounds for the kids outside," she said.

"I love to go out to eat, so lunch bunch is a great opportunity to go to a new restaurant with someone who speaks German. I have even gained some new friends out of it also," said Holly Nichols, a 172nd Support Battalion spouse who participates in the program.

The next lunch bunch is scheduled for Sept. 24. Participants are asked to meet at 11 a.m. in the ACS lobby to carpool to the restaurant. Lunches usually run until approximately 2 p.m. To sign up, or for more information, call ACS at CIV 09721-96-6933.



Photo by Christina Carmona

Prima Ballerina

From left, Shannon Alexander, Sydney Miller, Deja DeBorja, and Morgan Hopson practice for the end-of-summer ballet performance. School of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration, and Skills offers ballet classes for youth ages 3 to 9, held at Schweinfurt Elementary School. Classes will resume in September. To sign up your child, call CIV 09721-96-6460.

Photo by Sandra Wilson



New gymnastics class tumbles into Schweinfurt

by **SANDRA WILSON**
Bavarian News

Tumbling, vaulting, and cartwheels have finally made their way into the Schools of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration and Skills, otherwise known as SKIES. Gymnastics for kids ages 4 to 6 and 7 to 9 has begun at the Abrams Center.

"The good thing about gymnastics - you don't have to be good at anything. The kids can start from the really little things and get better," said Esther Perez, the new gymnastics instructor.

The SKIES program has also obtained equipment to enhance the variety of exercises provided for the participants.

"I called DJK ... and asked if they had equipment, and they said yes. They gave it to us for free," said SKIES Director Peter Potter, referring to a local sports club.

Along with additional donated equipment, Perez brings a wealth of personal experience to the classes. She has been involved in gymnastics for 20 years, began teaching it when she was 14 years old and obtained her license to teach by the age of 17.

Participants will learn a new skill each week, including exercises related to body tension and games involving jumping and hoops.

"The kids learn how to use their body," Perez said. Body awareness increases confidence, she said, and it can also have other future benefits.

"They develop what I call body-memory. They will learn better and adapt their muscles better. With a class like this, kids will open up to sports in general," Potter said.

For the younger group, participants can expect 45 minutes of instruction from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m., while ages 7-9 will meet for an hour from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Mondays. It is possible to sign up for the classes at any time.

For more information, call SKIES at CIV 09721-96-6460.



Perez

To view more photos of the SKIES ballet performance, as well as other community events and celebrations, visit the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt flickr Web page at www.flickr.com/photos/schweinfurtpao.

Iraq drawdown moves into second phase as planners discuss challenges still ahead

13th Sustainment Command Expeditionary Public Affairs

As Multi-National Corps - Iraq moves into the second phase of the drawdown of troops and equipment from Iraq, it faces challenges ranging from the withdrawal of roughly 80,000 service members to a connex filled with pink roller skates.

Although MNC-I has just finished phase one of the safe and responsible withdrawal of equipment and personnel in Iraq - setting the conditions - it has moved into the second phase of the drawdown without pause, said Lt. Col. Tammie Pettit, the Multi-National Corps - Iraq logistics plans chief at a sustainment conference Aug. 15 on Camp Victory.

"It's been a lot of hard work for a lot of people," Pettit said. "We've done pretty well."

Brig. Gen. Heidi Brown is leading the responsible drawdown of the roughly 130,000 troops in Iraq to roughly 50,000 by August 2010.

Additionally, the number of civilian contractors in country is slated to be reduced to roughly 75,000, Brown said.

Based on Brown's directives, Pettit said MNC-I has planned to reduce the nearly 200 bases throughout Iraq to six multi-class supply support activity hubs or SSAs - with roughly 20 smaller bases, called spokes - by September 2010, with complete withdrawal by December 2011.

"None of this is negotiable," said Pettit. "This is a mission we cannot fail."

MNC-I teams inventory, repair and update items the U.S. military will transport to Afghanistan, Kuwait, other overseas areas of operation or back to the United States, and the items to be

transferred to Iraqi control to support the enabling of Iraqi Security Forces as the U.S. withdraws, Pettit said.

"We're really starting to prime the pump to get stuff moving out of here," she said. "We'll continue to support (Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan) where we can."

She said phase two of the drawdown will build on the steps taken during phase one. In phase one, non-essential equipment was identified and in phase two, it will be retrograded, transferred or redirected to support other U.S. military priorities, Pettit said.

Chief Warrant Officer Paul Orthel, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) supply branch technician, said he plans to bring the number of SSAs in Iraq to 18 at the end of phase two.

Phase three will focus on safety operations, Pettit said.

The retrograde of equipment not required to support the upcoming elections in Iraq will allow units to focus on enhancing route security, moving forward with the drawdown and supporting redeploying units, she said.

"Protection of the force will still be paramount during this drawdown," Pettit said.

Orthel said this phase should bring the number of SSAs to 11.

Lt. Col. Lew Cureton, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) munitions branch chief, said he looks to the multinational divisions to determine where to send munitions as they are packaged and moved out of the SSAs during the next phases in the transition.

"We can't really draw down until we have a good understanding of



Photo by Spc. Brandy M. Oxford

Soldiers from the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, clean communication equipment as they prepare to return home at the end of their 15-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom earlier this year. Planners in Iraq are entering into the second phase of the drawdown, as they plan for retrograding personnel and equipment in the coming months.

where that's going to be," he said.

He said he knows those locations will change throughout the drawdown and anticipates the groups will adapt accordingly.

Throughout Iraq, a large but innumerable amount of connexes filled with everything from unused equipment and parts to pink roller skates present a particularly large challenge in the drawdown, said Pettit. Units should look within themselves for the personnel necessary to expedite this process safely, she said.

"It's going to take everybody," she said. "There is a lot of work to do. The folks following all of us are going to have a really difficult job."

Petraeus predicts tough fighting in Afghanistan

by JOHN J. KRUZEL
American Forces Press Service

The commander of U.S. Central Command said tough fighting lies ahead in Afghanistan, where the Taliban and other extremists have expanded their strength and influence, but he cautioned that success there demands more than battlefield victories.

With violence reaching peak levels this summer, reversing enemy security gains will require sustained commitment from U.S. and multinational forces, Army Gen. David H. Petraeus told the American Legion in Louisville, Ky., Aug. 25.

"Despite important achievements in various areas, given the deterioration in the security situation, an enormous amount of hard work and tough fighting lie ahead in Afghanistan," Petraeus said in his prepared remarks.

Nearly eight years into the war in Afghanistan, Petraeus said the primary objective remains clear: to ensure that transnational extremists such as al-Qaida are not able to re-establish the sanctuaries they had prior to the 9/11 attacks.



"Despite important achievements in various areas, given the deterioration in the security situation, an enormous amount of hard work and tough fighting lie ahead in Afghanistan."

Gen. David H. Petraeus, Commander, U.S. Central Command

But more than just killing or capturing terrorists and extremists, he added, the mission requires a counterinsurgency campaign akin to the strategy he oversaw as the top U.S. commander in Iraq -- an effort that placed greater focus on securing the population.

"And that is exactly what our troopers, along with their Afghan, NATO and other international partners, are intent on executing," he said.

About 62,000 American and 38,000 allied forces are deployed to Afghanistan.

Petraeus gave a snapshot of the counterinsurgency tactics that troops are carrying out: rebuilding communities recently cleared of insurgents, developing Afghan security forces, flipping "reconcilable" insurgent members into allies and stemming the flow of illegal drugs.

"They are also working with our civilian partners in helping to foster the growth of Afghan governance so it can achieve legitimacy in the eyes of the people," he added.

"Our troopers' hard work has, despite the increase in violence, paid dividends in a number of areas," he said.

Multinational troops last week aided Afghan security forces in protecting some 6,000 polling stations during the country's national election,

the first such balloting in Afghanistan in 30 years.

The polling results are expected to be announced by Sept. 17, defense officials said.

"Despite widespread Taliban threats and numerous attacks, millions of Afghan citizens stepped forward to vote for their next president and for provincial councils," Petraeus said.

Citing counterinsurgency successes since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, Petraeus highlighted a 600 percent increase in the number of students - matched by a seven-fold increase in trained teachers - at thousands of newly constructed schools and other achievements in building roads, hospitals and the nation's physical and political infrastructure.

At the same time, however, Petraeus said the Taliban and other elements of the so-called extremist syndicate have expanded their strength and influence, demanding a sustained push from those engaged in counterinsurgency efforts in Afghanistan.

"Reversing the downward trend in security in particular will require sustained, substantial commitment from all involved," he said.

VA simplifies compensation for post-traumatic stress

American Forces Press Service

The Veterans Affairs Department is taking steps to help veterans seeking compensation for post-traumatic



stress disorder, VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki announced today.

"The hidden wounds of war are being addressed vigorously and comprehensively by this

administration as we move VA forward in its transformation to the 21st century," Shinseki said.

VA is publishing a proposed regulation Aug. 24 in the Federal Register to make it easier for a veteran to claim service connection for PTSD by reducing the evidence needed if the stressor claimed is related to fear of hostile military or terrorist activity.

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a recognized anxiety disorder that can follow seeing or experiencing an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury to which a person responds with intense fear, helplessness or horror, and is not uncommon in war.

Photo illustration by Stephen Morgan

Comments on the proposed rule will be accepted over the next 60 days, and a final regulation will be published after consideration of all comments received, VA officials said.

Under the new rule, VA would not require corroboration of a stressor related to fear of hostile military or terrorist activity if a VA psychiatrist or psychologist confirms that the stressful experience recalled by a veteran adequately supports a diagnosis of PTSD and the veteran's symptoms are related to the claimed stressor.

Previously, claims adjudicators were required to corroborate that a noncombat veteran actually experienced a stressor related to hostile military activity.

This rule would simplify the development that is required for these cases, officials explained.

PTSD is a recognized anxiety disorder that can follow seeing or experiencing an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury to which a person responds with intense fear, helplessness or horror and is not uncommon in war.

Feelings of fear, confusion or anger often subside, officials noted, but if the feelings don't go away or get worse, a veteran may have PTSD.

VA is bolstering its mental health capacity to serve combat veterans, adding thousands of new professionals in the last four years.

The department also has established a toll-free suicide prevention helpline - 1-800-273-TALK - and has a Web site available for online chat in the evenings at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/Veterans/.

Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center begins highly praised exercise program

Story and photo by
AMY NEWCOMB
Bavarian News

The U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center is now harboring new equipment and, chances are, you a growing number of people have been using it. This new equipment has been placed in the USAG Grafenwoehr PFC for those dedicated to ‘CrossFitting.’

CrossFit is a principal strength and conditioning program that began with former gymnast Greg Glassman, who posted daily workout routines on the web. These routines are used by police officers, firefighters and now, the Grafenwoehr military community.

In February, Installation Management Command Europe’s Morale, Welfare and Recreation Sports hosted a quarterly meeting where sports directors were introduced to CrossFit. This is where director of MWR Fitness and Sports for USAG Grafenwoehr, Serge Kears, attended orientation for the CrossFit Program. “After going through the orientation, I was really interested in getting the (CrossFit) program started in Grafenwoehr,” Kears said.

Kears, with funds from MWR, put in a work request to upgrade an area of the basketball court in the Grafenwoehr PFC with equipment and supplies required to start the CrossFit Program. MWR also provided the funding for two registered volunteers certified to teach CrossFit classes.

The volunteers were trained with the understanding “that they come back to this garrison and provide free training to our Soldiers, family members and authorized civilians,” Kears said.

The first orientation of CrossFit to the USAG Grafenwoehr community, Aug. 15, certified CrossFit instructors Cpt. Jason Mulligan and Shannon Linville and introduced the equipment and exercises to eager participants.

While the USAG Grafenwoehr PFC was set up to accommodate 15 during orientation, the number grew to 33 attendees. The unexpected turnout had Mulligan and Linville excited for the program. “I wish I would have learned this

earlier because I look back now and I’m thinking all of those step classes I taught, everything else I do ... why didn’t I just do this, it incorporates your whole body and we are just glad that we can now spread it,” Linville said.

Mulligan and Linville began the Workout of the day, or ‘WOD’ as CrossFitters call it, after they showing the class how to perform each exercise correctly and efficiently. As the class rotated around the different stations, participantd noted that this was not a normal workout routine.

Participant Tina Ferguson said she had worked out for years with a pieced-together routine but the CrossFit Orientation gave her something new to think about.

“CrossFit was different ... it was explosive and very intense, the workout was short but delivered results that I haven’t felt with my normal workouts,” Ferguson said. “I would have to say I thought I was in shape before this orientation (but) this class made me feel every minute of the workout.”

The CrossFit Program measures fitness in 10 steps: cardiovascular/respiratory endurance; stamina; strength; flexibility; power; speed; coordination; agility; balance and accuracy. The diversity of this program is what delivers results according to active CrossFitters.

Besides fitness routines, the CrossFit Program also measures its success by offering information on Nutrition, the foundation of becoming fit.

At the end of orientation, Linville stressed the importance of nutritional value. Without eating properly, “you only get half the results,” Linville said. Part of eating healthy is to cut out Trans and Saturated Fats but to make sure that Polyunsaturated and Monounsaturated Fats are still part of a regular diet. “You only want to fuel your muscle, you do not want to feed your fat” Linville said.

Not only does the intake of fats need to be controlled but eating raw vegetable and fruits instead of processed food are a good way to start. “If it’s in the center isles of the commissary then you probably shouldn’t eat it” Mulligan said.

The number of devotees to CrossFit routines and nutritional guidelines are growing around

the globe and so are number of PFCs that offer CrossFit equipment and programs.

Mulligan has been a dedicated CrossFitter for 3 years and his ultimate goal is to participate in the 2011 CrossFit games. “This is the third (CrossFit game) and it is just blowing up ... a good indication of the growth of the program: in 2005 there was about 110 CrossFit PFCs ... today there is over 1,200,” Mulligan said.

Both Mulligan and Linville will continue to become certified in all aspects of CrossFit. Their enthusiasm and personal results from CrossFitting is a good indication for the future of this new fitness program. “If I could go to the highest mountain and yell on a megaphone what people could do to get in stupid-good shape ... CrossFit,” Mulligan said. “The cool thing is that it’s for everybody.”

The Grafenwoehr PFC is currently offering

CrossFit classes two times a week on Monday and Wednesday at 6 p.m. “We encourage everyone to go through this training as the class provides good information about the (CrossFit) program and proper exercise techniques are demonstrated,” Kears said.

Sign up for classes have begun but are limited to 10 participants on a first-come first-serve basis. “Depending on the availability of the instructor we are looking at adding another class per week ... however, the CrossFit area is open for everyone to use,” Kears said.

MWR has also planned to expand the CrossFit Program to Vilseck Rose Barracks Fitness Center and are working on converting the racquetball court into a CrossFit area.

For more information on CrossFit orientations and classes offered, visit the USAG Grafenwoehr PFC.



CrossFit participants learn the moves during the first official CrossFit orientation at Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center Aug. 15th.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS



Photo by Mark Manzo

The Nord Bayern Silver Chapter Warrant Officer Association gathered Aug. 27 for the first annual George Eby Memorial Run. The WOA organized the event to honor the late Eby who they described as a patriot who supported military families and Soldiers at U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr for 40 years. Eby founded the WOA in 1975. Also an active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars organization, Eby greeted thousands of Soldiers returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan as a representative of the community during his time at the garrison. Eby died Aug. 14.



Photo by Sgt. Adam Heller

Participants of the 2009 Friendship Walk, an event hosted by Education and Developmental Intervention Services to promote special-needs awareness, pass the finish line at the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center Aug. 29. Nearly 140 people participated in the event. To find out about EDIS events and meetings, call CIV 09662-83-3221.



Marathon!

The German communities of Weiden and Amberg will host the annual Weiden-Amberg Friendship Marathon Sept. 20. The full marathon will begin in Weiden at 9 a.m. and end in the Amberg marketplace with a beerfest. Half-marathons, relays, Nordic walking and biking versions of the event are also available.

More than 1,000 participants are expected.

For more information or to register, visit www.freundschaftsmarathon.de.

Left: The 2007 Friendship Marathon begins with a bang and thousands of participants.

Courtesy photo

Soldier participation, support makes BOSS program a success

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time ... throw the football around. My vision was to enhance those kids' lives. I think we did," Shomper said.

At the event, 45 BOSS members volunteered to participate and more than 450 students. "It really showed the community service that we provide," said Shomper noting that the high Soldier participation and volunteer rate are what makes the program what it is.

Shomper explained that the "Best Installation" runner-up award, judged on excellence of quality of life, community service and recreation and leadership, was achieved "because we're growing every day. We have an excellent chain of command ... We have Soldiers who want to participate ... Not a lot of them can say that they walked away with 45 volunteers for any type of community service whatsoever."

Attending the conference also gave Shomper new ideas and motivation for the future of program.

"As far as winning (at) the conference, all it does is fuel my ambition next year to win first place in everything," Shomper said with a laugh. "That may be stretching it a little bit, but that's my goal. It just puts a little more pressure on me and on my fellow Soldiers to make sure we do everything we can to make our BOSS program the best BOSS program out there."

Future goals of the program include community service organized with local German mayors. According to Shomper, the goal is to keep the relationship with surrounding communities strong.

Shomper also hopes to host at least

three events for single Soldiers each month.

The USAG Grafenwoehr BOSS program will soon benefit from a partnership with the United Service Organization. The new USO facilities, which will be opening soon next to the Service Credit Union on USAG Grafenwoehr's Main Post, will also house the new BOSS office and headquarters and will share the facility as a Soldier center.

After discussing the upcoming opportunities for single Soldiers, Shomper concluded, "We have the opportunity to make our program just explode. That's my plan."

To get involved in the Grafenwoehr BOSS program, or for more, contact Shomper at DSN 475-8822, CIV 0173-439-6294.



Above: Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr, sits in the drivers seat of a 250,000 Euro Ford GT at the BOSS Car show Aug. 22 at the USAG Grafenwoehr Post Exchange.



Left: Garrison leadership Col. Chris Sorenson (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios (right) pose for a photo with USAG Grafenwoehr BOSS President Robert Shomper at the BOSS car show Aug. 22.

Photos by Sgt. Adam Heller

Incoming commander greets community

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contemporary operating environment in Iraq, Afghanistan and other theaters of operations – is a testament to the skills of the professional NCOs, officers and civilians in this organization."

Salazar also recognized the significant involvement of those units and individuals outside JMTC that contribute to the command's success.

"JMTC does not work alone," said Salazar. "Without the support of the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr and the local community, JMTC could not provide the quality training that we do."

Brig. Gen. Salazar follows Brig. Gen. David R. Hogg as the commanding general of JMTC. Hogg, who is currently serving as the deputy chief of staff for operations for the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, departed JMTC in June.

"General Salazar will bring fresh blood, fresh ideas and a new energy into making the JMTC better than it is today," said Hogg as he bid farewell to the command and the community earlier this summer. "He is a great guy and the right one for the job."

"It is truly an honor for me to command such a fine organization and to be part of such a great community," said Salazar. "I look forward to working with all of you."

Clubs thank those who build German-American bond

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out to more than 800,000 people.

During the awards event, Bagby presented 14 support awards. Eleven non-members received recognition for their service as well.

The Fulda club received the group high achievement award in category for community support at a community without a military presence. The club was also praised for its fundraising, marketing, public relations and education efforts.

The Fulda group was also recognized for its "push and pull" program that teaches young people living on former U.S. installations in their city the history of those kasernes and the Army's history in Fulda and Germany.

The Vilseck club received the high achievement award in the category for community support in a community with a military presence. It was recognized for its support of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment's

single Soldiers with its "2SCR Welcome Home Program."

The Heidelberg club received praise for its cultural awareness programs and activities.

Several club supporters were also recognized for their individual achievements.

Jurgen Ullrich of Vilseck was honored for organizing special events and several barbecues and putting in 650 volunteer hours last year.

Renate Schwarzenberger of Hohenfels was saluted for making frequent visits to spouses of deployed Soldiers in the Vilseck, Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels communities and opening her home to Army family members.

Lothar Gogolka was honored for his efforts in making the Grafenwoehr club one of the strongest in Germany, building relationships among the military and neighboring communities and increasing membership to more than 200.

For more information on KONTAKT Clubs across Germany, visit www.biknet.de.



The KONTAKT Club is a German-American friendship organization sponsored by the U.S. Army. Members include Soldiers, families, civilians and and German citizens from surrounding communities. Community members are invited to get involved in their local Club's activities.

Courtesy graphic

Spouse employment 'key to quality of life' for military families

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service as part of an effort to recruit and retain skilled and experienced members of the armed forces and to recognize and honor the service of members injured, disabled, or killed in connection with their service."

"Military spouse employment is a key to the quality of life of our military families," Kathleen Ott, director of talent acquisition, development and management in the Office of the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy, said Aug. 13 during an interview with Pentagon Channel and American Forces Press Service reporters.

The availability of jobs for military spouses contributes to the sustainment of the all-volunteer force, Ott said, citing a recent survey in which employed military spouses reported that their work income constitutes about 48 percent of total family income.

"But, it's really hard to keep a job if you have to move from station to station," Ott said. Federal employment, she said, offers military spouses a portable career with transferable benefits and worldwide presence.

"We thought, in order to help

our military spouses continue their employment, it would be a good thing for us to facilitate their entry into the federal government," she said.

Eligible individuals, Ott said, including spouses of active-duty servicemembers who have been called on to relocate. This includes spouses of Guardsmen or reservists who've been called up for more than 180 days of active service other than training. Eligible spouses must be moving to another duty station accompanied by their servicemember husband or wife.

Spouses of former servicemembers listed as 100-percent disabled and

separated or retired, as well as widows or widowers of servicemembers who died on active duty and who have not remarried also are eligible.

The new hiring authority does not constitute a hiring preference for eligible military spouses, according to OPM. "This authority is a noncompetitive hiring mechanism; it does not establish or constitute a hiring preference for eligible spouses, nor does it create an entitlement to a federal job for an eligible spouse," according to regulatory documents listed in the Federal Register.

Applicants still must meet specific job-qualification criteria listed for

individual positions, according to OPM documents.

"This is not a preference. We firmly believe that our spouses can compete on their own merits," Ott said, noting that the new hiring rules provide military spouses with "a streamlined, facilitated means of obtaining federal employment."

Use of the new hiring authority "is completely at the discretion of hiring agencies," according to OPM documents, and "it is one of many hiring tools agencies may use to recruit needed individuals."

Spouses who complete three years of continuous satisfactory service will be converted from a career-conditional appointment to career appointment, Ott said.

Personnel officials do not anticipate that the new military-spouse hiring authority would adversely affect the hiring of military veterans into the federal government, Ott said.

Military spouses can find out about federal job opportunities through OPM's USAJobs Web site, Ott said.

The new hiring authority "sends a very important message to our military families that their sacrifice is recognized by the federal government, and that they recognize that having

a career opportunity is really critical for their family's well being," said Barbara Thompson, director of the Pentagon's Office of Family Policy/Children and Youth.

More than 77 percent of military spouses have indicated in surveys that they are interested in establishing careers, Thompson said. Other data, she added, indicates that military spouses are, overall, more highly educated than their civilian counterparts.

"I think it's a win-win situation that the federal government is accessing a pool of spouses who have the same levels of commitment and caring and service to the nation," Thompson said.

The department's Military Spouse Career Advancement Account, also known as MyCAA, provides employment, career, education/training, counseling and financial assistance for spouses of active-duty military and activated Guard and reserve members worldwide, she said.

President George W. Bush issued an executive order establishing guidelines for the hiring authority in September 2008, but implementation of the order was delayed while it was reviewed by the Obama administration.

It's really hard to keep a job if you have to move from station to station ... We thought, in order to help our military spouses continue their employment, it would be a good thing to facilitate their entry into federal government.

Kathleen Ott
Director of Talent Acquisition, Development and Management